

NAVAL FIGHTERS NUMBER EIGHTEEN

PART THREE

Vought's F-8 Crusader

MARINE FIGHTER SQUADRONS



BY STEVE GINTER

AIRFMFLANT

SQUADRON	CODE	1958	1959							1966	1967	1968
VMF-122	DC	(20)F8U-1	(20)F8U-1	(18)F8U-1	(19)F8U-1	(10)F-8A (10)F-8B	(20)F-8E					
VMF-235	DB		(20)F8U-1	(10)F8U-1 (11)F8U-1E	(9)F8U-1	(20)F-8D	(20)F-8E	(20)F-8E	(15)F-8E			
VMF-251	DW				(12)F8U-1 (10)F8U-1E		(24)F-8B	(20)F-8B				
VMF-251	AK					(13)F-8B						
VMF-312	DR		(19)F8U-1	(12)F8U-1 (11)F8U-1E								
VMF-333	DN			(20)F8U-2	(23)F8U-2	(22)F-8C	(20)F-8C	(20)F-8C	(18)F-8C	(4)F-8D (12)F-8E	(4)F-8D (10)F-8E	
VMF-451	VM						(21)F-8D	(21)F-8D	(15)F-8D			
H&MS-32	DA		(3)F8U-1			(6)F-8A (5)F-8B				(1)F-8D		

AIRFMFPAC

VMF-122	DC							(1)F-8D (20)F-8E	(15)F-8B (1)F-8E	(15)F-8D		
VMF-212	WD							(15)F-8B	(12)F-8D	(7)F-8D	(?)F-8E	
VMF-232	WT		(21)F8U-1	(3)F8U-1 (20)F8U-1E	(20)F8U-1E	(18)F-8B	(24)F-8B	(27)F-8B	(15)F-8D	(9)F-8E		
VMF-235	DB						(27)F-8D			(18)F-8E	(18)F-8E	(14)F-8B
VMF-251	DW	(5)F8U-1	(20)F8U-1	(1)F8U-1 (20)F8U-1E (1)F8U-2								
VMF-312	DR				(21)F8U-1E	(22)F-8B	(35)F-8B	(22)F-8E	(18)F-8E			
VMF-323	WS		(19)F8U-1	(19)F8U-1	(9)F8U-1	(12)F-8C	(19)F-8E					
VMF-334	W V	(18)F8U-1			(14)F8U-2	(11)F-8E						
VMF-334	WU	(18)F8U-1	(21)F8U-1	(21)F8U-1	(1)F8U-1 (9)F8U-2 (5)F8U-2N	(19)F-8C	(24)F-8C	(19)F-8C	(17)F-8C	(14)F-8C		
VMF-451	VM			(24)F8U-2	(12)F8U-2 (15)F8U-2N	(27)F-8D						
H&MS-11	TM			(4)F8U-1	(1)F8U-1E			(19)F-8D				
H&MS-13	YU			(1)F8U-1	(4)F8U-1 (1)F8U-1E	(1)F-8A (6)F-8B	(2)F-8B					
H&MS-33	WM				(2)F8U-2	(1)F-8B	(3)F-8C					

MARINE AIR RESERVE

SQUADRON	BASE	TAIL	CODES
VMF-111	DALLAS	7D	
VMF-112	DALLAS	7D	5D MA
VMF-321	ANDREWS	6A	5A MG
VMF-351	ATLANTA	7B	5B MC
VMF-511	W.GROVE	7W	5W MK
VMF-113	OLATHE	7K	
VMF-215	OLATHE	7K	5K

Up till the reorganization of the reserves in 1971, Navy and Marine units shared F-8 as-sets



DEDICATION - TO COL. HOWARD E. CARR

Anyone having photos or other information on this aircraft or other 50's era naval aircraft, may submit them for possible inclusion in future issues. Any material submitted will become the property of NAVAL FIGHTERS unless prior arrangement is made. Individuals are responsible for security clearance of any material before submission. **ISBN 0-942612-18-3**

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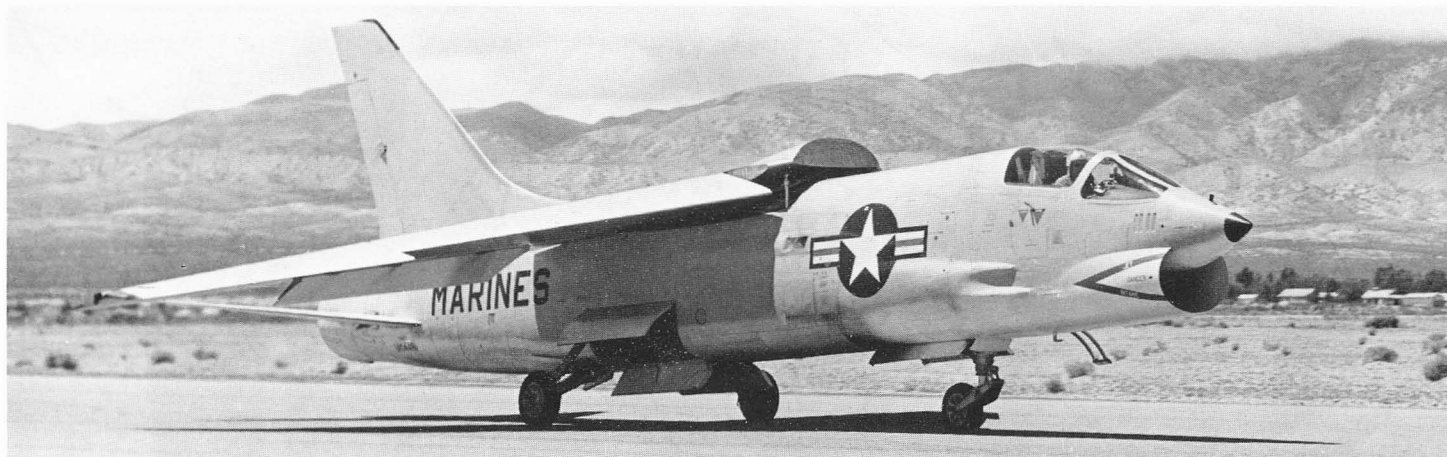
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FRONT COVER - VMF-334 F-8Cs 146916 and 146925 over the San Bernardino Mountains while stationed at MCAS El Toro on 11-24-64. (USMC)

BACK COVER - VMF(AW)-312 F-8Es 150346, 150660, 150349, and 150663 over the San Bernardino Mountains on 12-12-63. (USMC) VMF(AW)-122 F-8Es 149220, 149215, and 149214 over MCAS Cherry Point in 1962. (USMC)

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MARINE FIGHTERS

INTRODUCTION

This book provides brief squadron histories and extensive color and markings for Marine F-8 Fighter squadrons. This book differs from previous books in that the aircraft's development and testing was covered in Part One of this four-part F-8 series. Naval Fighters Number Sixteen is 114 pages and covers the F-8's development and testing, foreign users and the F8U-3. Authored by Steve Pace it retails for \$15.95. Naval Fighters Number Seventeen is 66 pages and covers the Navy and Marine RF-8 photo Crusader squadrons. It retails for \$10.95.

OVERVIEW

Marine fighter squadrons used the following models: F8U-1 (F-8A), F8U-1E (F-8B), F8U-2 (F-8C), F8U-2N (F-8D), F8U-2NE (F-8E), F-8H, F-8K, and F-8L. See Naval Fighters #16 for detailed breakdown of F-8 production and listings of remanufacturing programs.

The Marines became directly involved with the F-8 Crusader right from the start as evidenced by F8U-1 140448 which was the fifth F8U-1 built. Seen here being tested at MCAAS Mojave, Ca., in May 1957. Maintenance for 448 was provided by Vought technicians. (via Jansson).

F8U-1 (F-8A): The first production aircraft had the narrow oval nose cone with a small radome section and did not have ventral fins or afterburner cooling air scoops on the aft fuselage. Armament consisted of four 20mm cannons, an internal rocket pack, and – although perhaps not initially – two Sidewinders. The first aircraft delivered did not have the inflight refueling installation but this was soon added to aircraft in production and retrofitted to the aircraft which had been delivered. All aircraft were delivered with the Vought ejection seat which was eventually replaced with the Martin-Baker seat.

F8U-1E (F-8B): This aircraft was virtually identical to the -1 except the radome area was enlarged to be the size of the whole nose cone rather than being just a small portion at the tip. All were also delivered with the Vought seat.

F8U-2 (F-8C): This aircraft retained the -1E radome. The major change was the addition of ventral fins and the afterburner cooling scoops to the rear fuselage. Armament capability included the four-Sidewinder rack installation, although perhaps not initially. This aircraft was produced with the Martin-Baker seats.

F8U-2N (F-8D): The armament system was refined with this -2 variant. The rocket pack was deleted and Sidewinder capability expanded by the retrofit of the infrared scanner above the radome as used on the F-8E as well as provision for the four-Sidewinder rack installation.



F8U-2NE (F-8E): With the last production change, the nose radome became wider so that it was round instead of oval in cross section. The infrared scanner was retained. The pitot moved to the tip of the nose and there were subtle changes to the cooling vents behind the radome as well. During early production, wing store pylon provisions were added and a bump for additional electronics appeared on the top of the wing center section and forward fuselage. Previously produced -2NE's were reportedly retrofitted with these changes.

F-8H: 89 were F-8D's remanufactured to add the wing stores capability and electronics bump that first appeared on the F-8E.

F-8K: 87 of the F-8C's were also rebuilt and redesignated F-8K. There were no significant external changes although all had the wing stores capability incorporated (but not the electronics bump).

F-8L: 61 of the F-8B's were rebuilt to the F-8L in a program similar to that for the F-8C/K. Provisions for ventral fins as well as wing stores were apparently included during the rebuild. F-8Ls without ventral fins can be distinguished by fairings located along lower rear fuselage.



MARINE FIGHTER SQUADRON

ONE ONE ONE VMF-111
"DEVIL DOGS"

VMF-111 was activated in 1925 as VF-2M at Quantico, Virginia. In 1927 it was redesignated VR-9M and in July 1928 VF-5M. The designation changed to VF-9M in August 1930 and to VMF-1 in 1937. Finally in 1941 the squadron became VMF-111 and adopted the title of "Devil Dogs". The squadron was deactivated in November 1945.

Reactivated on 1 June 1948 as part of the Marine Air Reserve at NAS Dallas, Texas, the squadron once again flew the F4U Corsair. The F9F Panther came next followed by F9F-6 Cougar and the FJ-4/4B Fury.

The F-8A Crusader arrived in January 1964. VMF-111 was deactivated on 22 October 1965 with the reorganization of the Marine Air Reserves and all of the squadron's assets were turned over to its sister squadron VMF-112.



MARINE FIGHTER SQUADRON

ONE ONE TWO VMF-112
"COWBOYS"

VMF-112 was commissioned on 1 March 1942 at San Diego, California, where the squadron adopted the name of the "Wolf Pack". The squadron took its F4U-1 Corsairs to war in October 1942 when they arrived at Noumea, New Caledonia. After participating in the campaigns for Guadalcanal, Southern Solomons, and Iwo Jima, the squadron relocated to MCAS Miramar in August 1943.

VMF-112 returned to the war zone in November 1944 and deployed onboard the USS Benington (CV-20) in January 1945. The Wolf Pack finished the war as the third highest scoring Marine Fighter Squadron. The squadron relocated to MCAS El Centro, California in July 1945 and was deactivated on 10 September 1945.

On 1 July 1946 the squadron was reactivated as Marine Air Detach-



ment, Marine Air Reserve Training Command, Naval Air Station Dallas, Texas. Initially flying the FG-1D Corsair the Cowboys transitioned to F9F Panthers and then to the FJ-3/3M Fury in 1959 followed by the FJ-4B (AF-1E) Fury in 1963.

The first F-8A Crusader arrived at Dallas in January 1964 and by year's end twenty three Crusaders were on hand. VMF-112 and its sister squadron VMF-111 were the first Marine Reserve squadrons to receive the F-8 Crusaders because Vought's F-8 factory was located in Dallas. By 1970 the F-8As had been replaced by F-8Ks which in turn were replaced with F-8Hs in 1971/72. The cowboys continued to fly the F-8H until being redesignated Marine Attack Fighter Squadron 112 (VMFA-112) in 1976 when they acquired the F-4N Phantom. Today VMFA-112 flies the F-4S which it acquired in 1987.

F-8A 143743 at NAS Dallas on 9-24-66. In the 1950s and 60s, Navy and Marine reservists shared aircraft, hence this Crusader was used by VMF-111 and VMF-112 alike. (Clay Jansson)





VMF-112 F-8H 148692 being refueled from an A-3 Skywarrior in 1971. (USN)

VMF-112 F-8K ??? as seen at Buckley ANGB in May 1971. (Barry Miller)



Tailhook Association
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Bonita, CA 92002

F-8 assigned to COMMANDER MAG-41 carries the distinctive red shark mouth, lightning bolt and fin stripes with white stars. Note the double-nuts on the nose and tail and the white shaded tail code. (Merle C. Olmstead collection via AAHS)

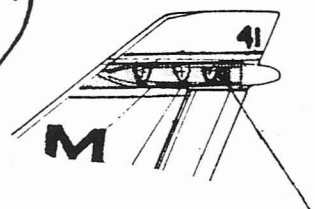
VMF-112 F-8K 146981 with powder blue ventral fins and tail stripe, note white Texas on ventral fins and the three Crusader shields on the tail stripe. (Fred Roos/Naval Fighters)



F-8H 147062 from VMF-112 takes a wave-off at NAS Dallas. (Arthur L. Schoeni via AAHS)



three white shields painted on the EMC fairing



powder blue stripe bordered by white

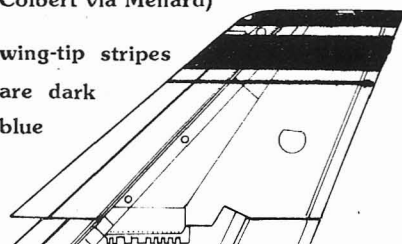


powder blue ventral fin with white "Texas"



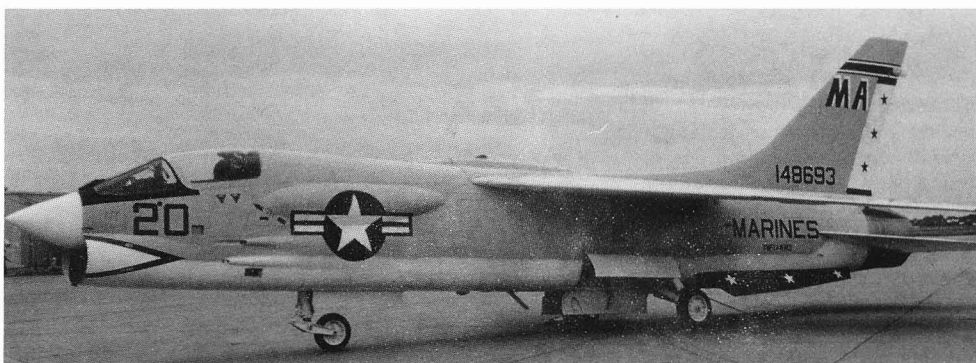
VMF-112 F-8H 148681 in June 1972. Note "5D" tail code has been replaced by "MA" and the double nuts markings signifying the Commanding Officer's aircraft. The F-8H was a remanufactured F-8D which included the addition of underwing pylons as shown here. Ventral fin and tail stripe are powder blue: "MARTD" stands for Marine Air Reserve Training Detachment. (D.B. Colbert via Menard)

wing-tip stripes are dark blue



F-8H 148693 with VMF(AW)-112 on the fuselage was refurbished as a display aircraft at NAS Dallas; note that the I.R. head has been removed.

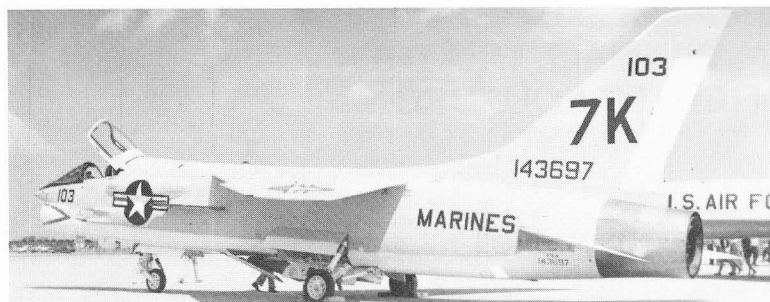
F-8H 148666 is shown in the Cowboy's last F-8 paint scheme; ventral fin and stripes are dark blue. See wing-tip drawing. (Fred Roos/Naval Fighters)



**MARINE FIGHTER
SQUADRON
TWO ONE FIVE
VMF-215
"FIGHTING CORSAIRS"**

VMF-215 was activated on 1 September 1942. Its Corsairs entered combat on 25 July 1943 and by the end of the war the squadron had racked up 137 Japanese planes destroyed, before being deactivated.

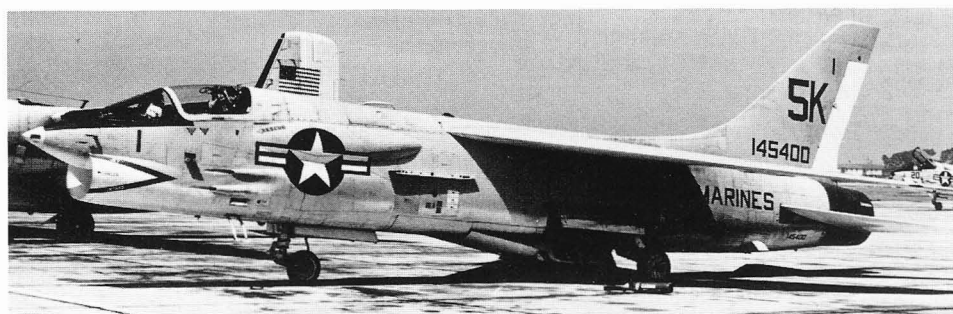
VMF-215 was reactivated at NAS Olathe, Kansas, as part of the Marine Air Reserve program. The Fighting Corsairs flew the F9F-6 Cougars in 1958 which were replaced by F9F-8/8Bs. In 1962 the Cougars were replaced with the Douglas F4D Skyray which was flown until April 1965 when eighteen F-8A Crusaders replaced the venerable Ford. The F-8As were replaced by F-8Ks and the squadron was deactivated with the reorganization of the reserves in 1971.



Generic F-8A 143697 as used by both VMF-113 and 215. (Collect-Air)
F-8B 145423 of VMF-215 with flat black fin tip. (Jerry Gerr)



F-8A 145400 of VMF-215 in 1968 with new "5K" tail code.



F-8K 146983 on 11-29-69 with red tail stripe and white stars added. (Fred Roos)



**MARINE FIGHTER
SQUADRON
ONE ONE THREE
VMF-113
"WHISTLING DEVILS"**

VMF-113 was activated on 1 January 1943 at MCAS El Toro, California. On 15 September the squadron departed for the war zone via MCAS Ewa, Hawaii. The Whistling Devils took part in the Marshals and Okinawan campaigns and was credited with twenty-one Japanese aircraft destroyed. After doing a brief stint at Kyushu, Japan, VMF-113 returned to MCAS El Toro, California, by 1 January 1946 before being deactivated later that year.

VMF-113 was reactivated at NAS Olathe, Kansas, as part of the Marine Air Reserve program. Flying the F9F-6 Cougar in 1958 the squadron transitioned to the F9F-8/8B and then the Douglas F4D (F-6A) Skyray in May 1962. The Skyray was replaced by F-8A Crusaders in April 1965 and VMF-113 was deactivated on 22 October 1965. The squadron's assets were transferred to its sister squadron VMF-215.



MARINE ALL-WEATHER FIGHTER SQUADRON ONE TWENTY TWO VMF(AW)-122 "CRUSADERS"

Marine Fighter Squadron 122 (VMF-122) was commissioned on 1 March 1942 at Camp Kearney, Ca., and assigned to Marine Aircraft Group 12 (MAG-12) 1st. Marine Aircraft Wing (1st. MAW). VMF-122 was reassigned to the 2nd. MAW in August and to MAG-11 in September 1942. On 13 October 1942, VMF-122 took their F4F Wildcats to Espiritu Santo and then on to Henderson Field, Guadalcanal. The squadrons provided combat air patrols, close air support and air cover for Army B-25s and B-24s.

In April 1943, VMF-122 left Guadalcanal for Espiritu Santo where its pilots qualified in F4U-1 Corsairs. The squadron returned to combat in time for the New Georgia campaign during which VMF-122 shot down 35-1/2 Japanese aircraft. In August 1943 the squadron embarked onboard the USS Puebla to reorganize and refit back in the states.

The squadron was reorganized and underwent intensive training for almost a year at Marine Air Depot Miramar, Ca. VMF-122 embarked on the USS Hollandia for Peleliu in July 1944. VMF-122's FG-1A Corsairs were used for the remainder of the war to neutralize Central Pacific bases with napalm, bombs, and rockets until December 1945 when they were transferred to MCAAS Oak Grove, New Bern, North Carolina. In September 1947 they moved to MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina, and in 1948 to MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina.

In November 1947 VMF-122 became the first Marine squadron to



F8U-1 143791 from VMF-122, the first Marine Crusader squadron, in May 1958. (Crimmons)

employ jet aircraft. They equipped with FH-1 Phantoms and initiated a flight demonstration team known as the "Flying Leathernecks". In 1949 the F2H Banshee replaced the FH-1s. The Banshees were taken aboard the USS Oriskany (CV-34) for a Mediterranean cruise from October 1950 to October 1951.

VMF-122 was to transition to F9F-4 Panthers in early 1952, but problems with the dash 4 lead to the temporary usage of F6F-5 Hellcats. The F9F-4s began arriving in mid-1952 and were replaced later that year by F9F-5 Panthers. The Panthers deployed aboard the USS Coral Sea (CVA-43) to the Mediterranean from April 1953 until October 1953.

VMF-122 became the first Marine squadron to equip with the FJ-2 Fury in January 1954. The FJ-2s deployed to the Mediterranean from March to September 1955 aboard the USS Coral Sea (CVA-43). After returning to MCAS Cherry Point, the dash twos were traded in for FJ-3s and several FJ-3Ms.

The squadron transferred to MCAAS Beaufort in September 1957 and in December became the first squadron in the Marines to take delivery of the supersonic F8U-1 (F-8A) Crusader. VMF-122's commanding officer, Lt. Col. W.H. Rankin, abolished the squadron's "Candystripers" insignia and instituted the "Crusaders" insignia of today.

Transition training was conducted at VF(AW)-3 at NAS Moffett Field, Ca. Training continued on into 1959 when VMF-122 became the first Marine squadron to carrier qualify the F-8 while training aboard the USS Independence (CVA-62). The first F-8Es arrived in October 1962 and the squadrons deployed to NAS Key West, Fl. until December 1962 in support of the U.S. Forces during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Before the

squadron was completely re-equipped with F-8Es some interim F-8Bs were used due to a temporary shortage of "E" models. On 1 October 1962 VMF-122 was redesignated VMF(AW)-122 due to the enhanced capabilities of the F-8Es.

The squadron deployed overseas in January 1964 to NAS Atsugi, Japan and was reassigned to MAG-11, 1st. MAW. This was their first overseas deployment in over eighteen years. VMF(AW)-122 flew operations from Taiwan, Okinawa, the Philippines and stood strip alerts at Yokota AFB. In January 1965 the squadron's Crusaders were left in Japan to be used by VMF(AW)-312 and VMF(AW)-122 rotated to MCAS El Toro, Ca. for conversion to the F-4B Phantom. The squadron continued to fly some F-8Bs as an interim aircraft.

On 1 July 1965 the switch to F-4s caused the squadron to be redesignated VMFA-122. The squadron became the replacement training squadron until transacted to Vietnam in August 1967. VMFA-122 operated out of Da Nang Air Base from 1 September 1967 to 1 September 1968 and participated in the siege of Khe Sanh and the Tet Offensive.

On 1 September 1968 VMFA-122 rotated from Da Nang to MCAS Iwakuni, Japan. A year later on 5 September 1969 VMFA-122 was operating out of Chu Lai, RVN. One year later on 9 September 1970 the squadron redeployed to MCAS Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, remaining there until 14 August 1974. The squadron started transition training for the F-14A Tomcat at NAS Miramar, Ca., but never finished as the Marine F-14 program was cancelled.

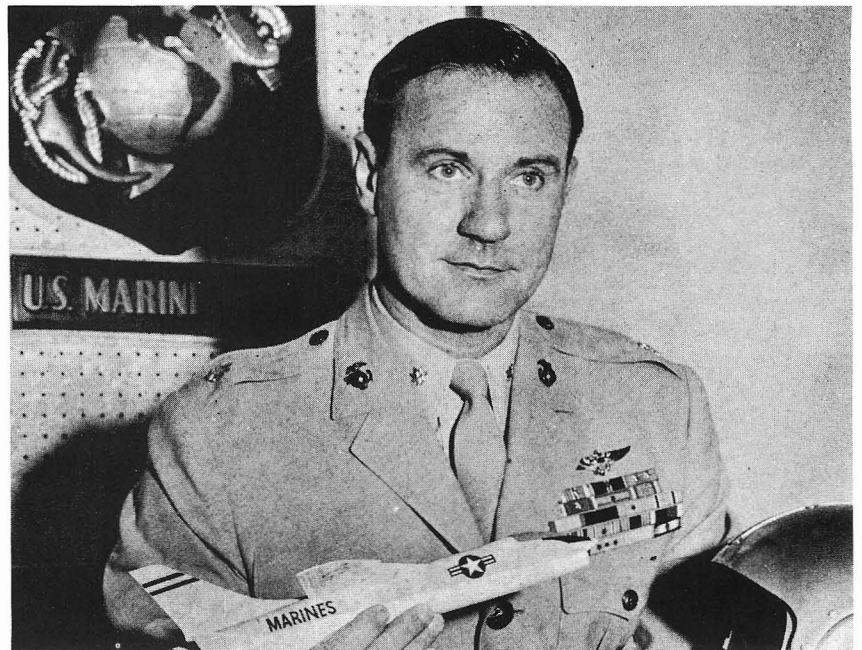
VMFA-122 was reactivated at MCAS Beaufort on 4 December 1975 with F-4J Phantoms. The squadron transitioned to the FA-18 Hornet in March 1986.



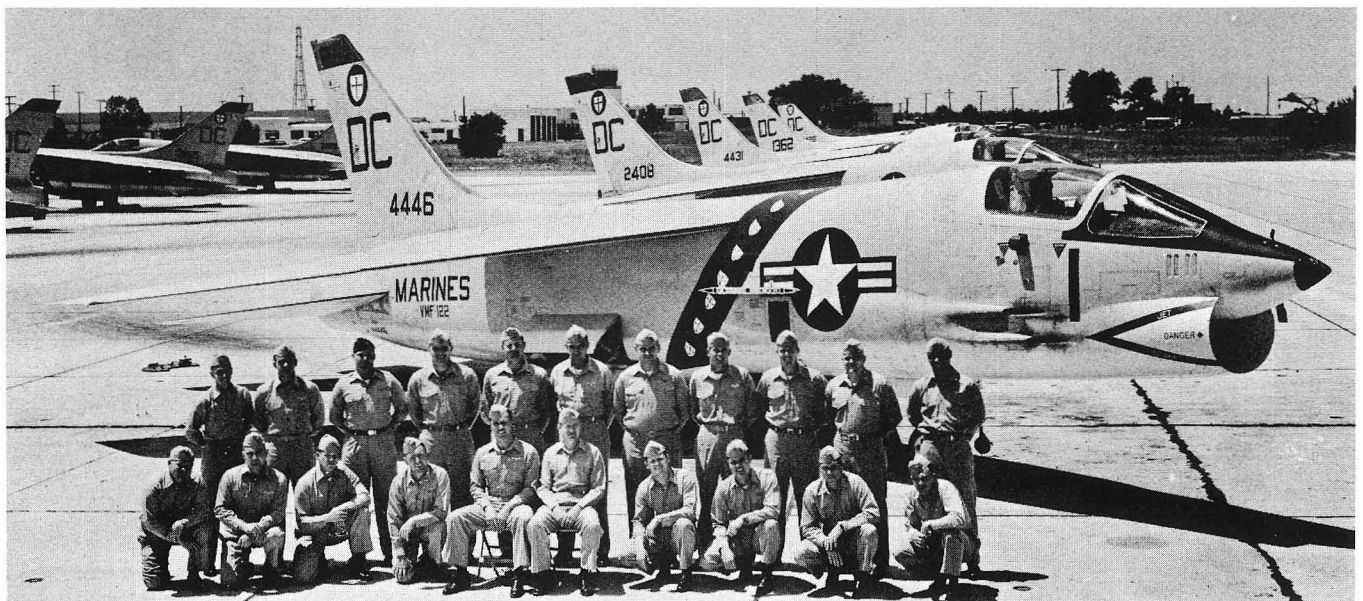
THE MAN WHO RODE THE THUNDER

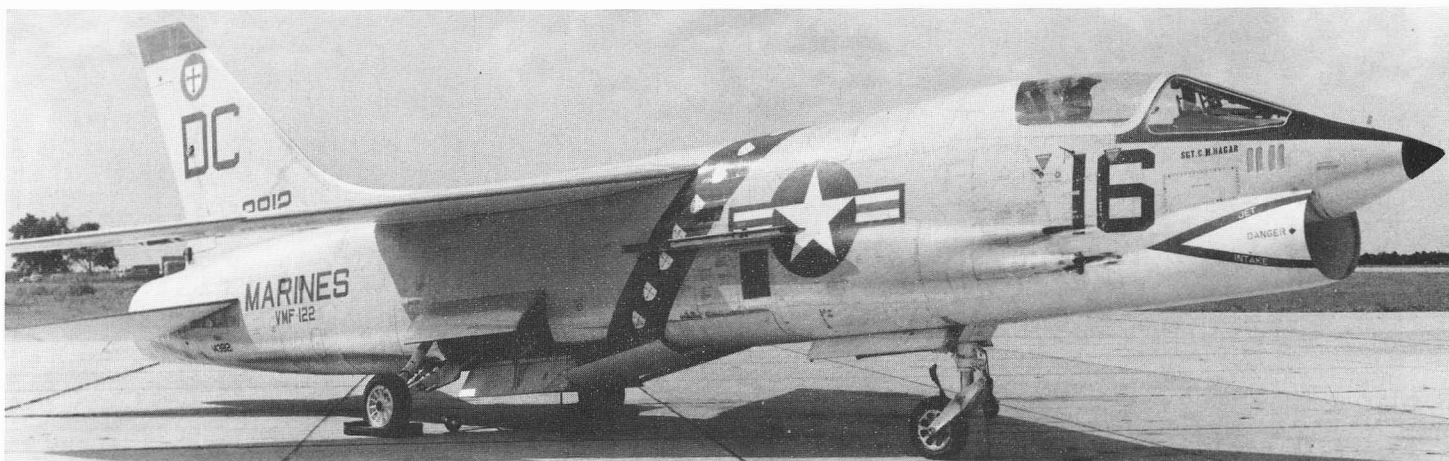
VMF-122, the Crusader and the squadron's CO, LT. COL. William H. Rankin were catapulted into the national spotlight on 26 July 1959 through the intervening hand of mother nature. On that day LT. COL. Rankin earned his place in the Guinness book of records by surviving the longest parachute descent in history. While passing through 47,000 feet the F8U-1's engine seized, whereupon the ram air turbine (RAT) was deployed to generate electrical power to the controls. However, the RAT did not deploy as the handle came off in LT. COL. Rankin's hand. Now no longer able to control the aircraft or even be able to dive to a lower, safer altitude for ejection, Rankin ejected. The descent through a violent thunderstorm over North Carolina took an incredible 40 minutes instead of the expected 11 minutes as he was repeatedly forced upwards by the storm's vertical air currents.

Two VMF-122 F8U-1 conducting a section take off; fin tips are black and circle behind shields is dark blue. (via Don Sperring)

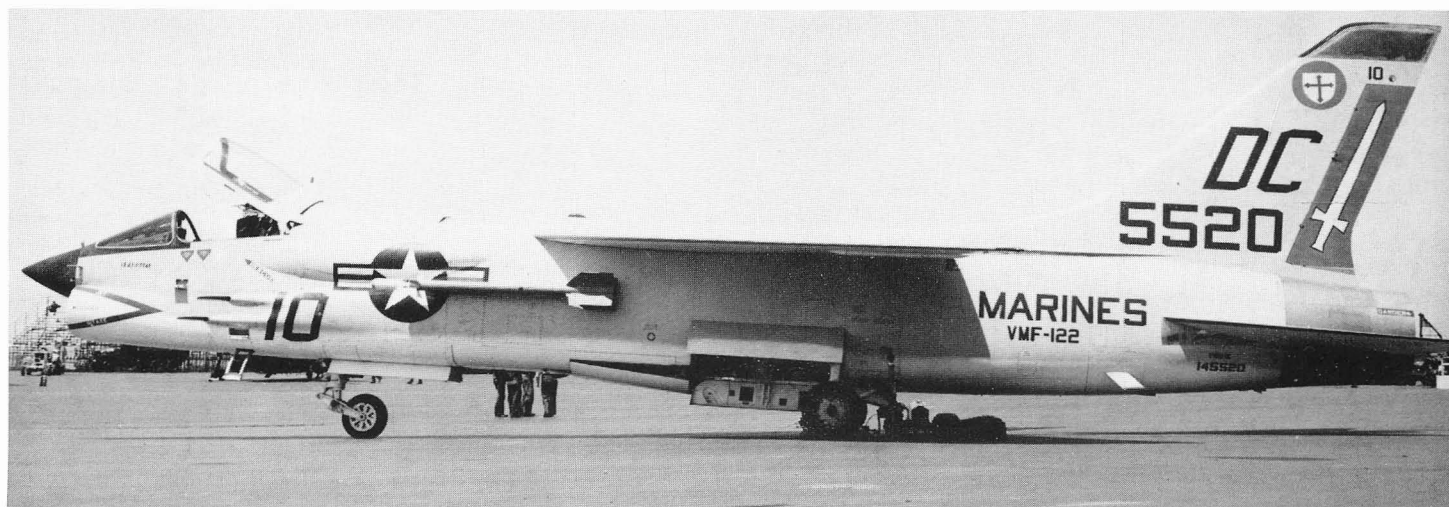
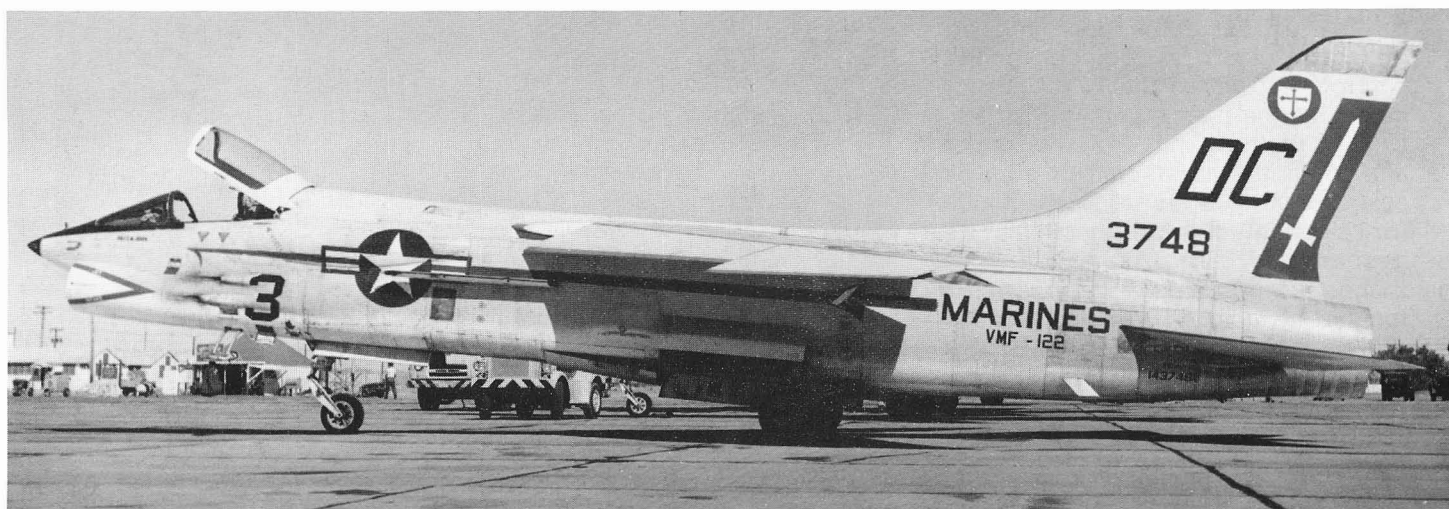
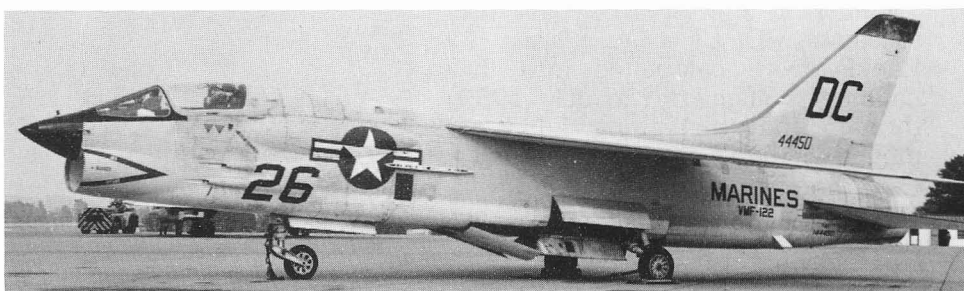


Lt. Col. William H. Rankin in a publicity photo following his bailout incident. Squadron photo below of VMF-122's officers in front of their F8U-1s. Note blue fuselage stripe adorned with Crusader shields. (USN)



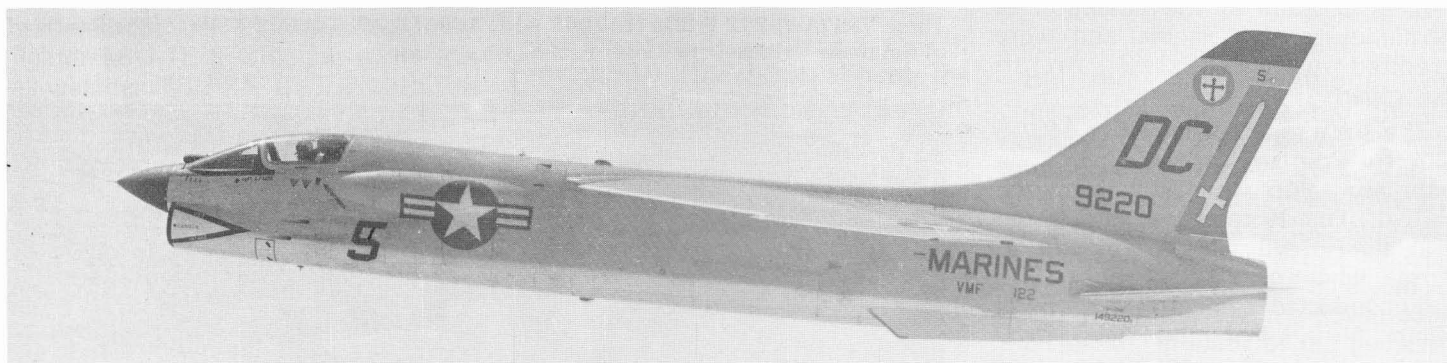


F8U-1 143812 on 9-9-58 with blue fuselage stripe and enlarged nose number. (USMC via W.T. Larkins) F8U-1 144450 with relocated nose number. F8U-1 (F-8A) 143748 at MCAS Yuma in March 1960. Rudder and fuselage lance are dark blue. (Swisher) By 1962 the fuselage lance had disappeared on VMF-122 Crusaders as evidenced in this 5-10-62 photo of F8U-1E (F-8B). (Dave Lucabach via Jansson)

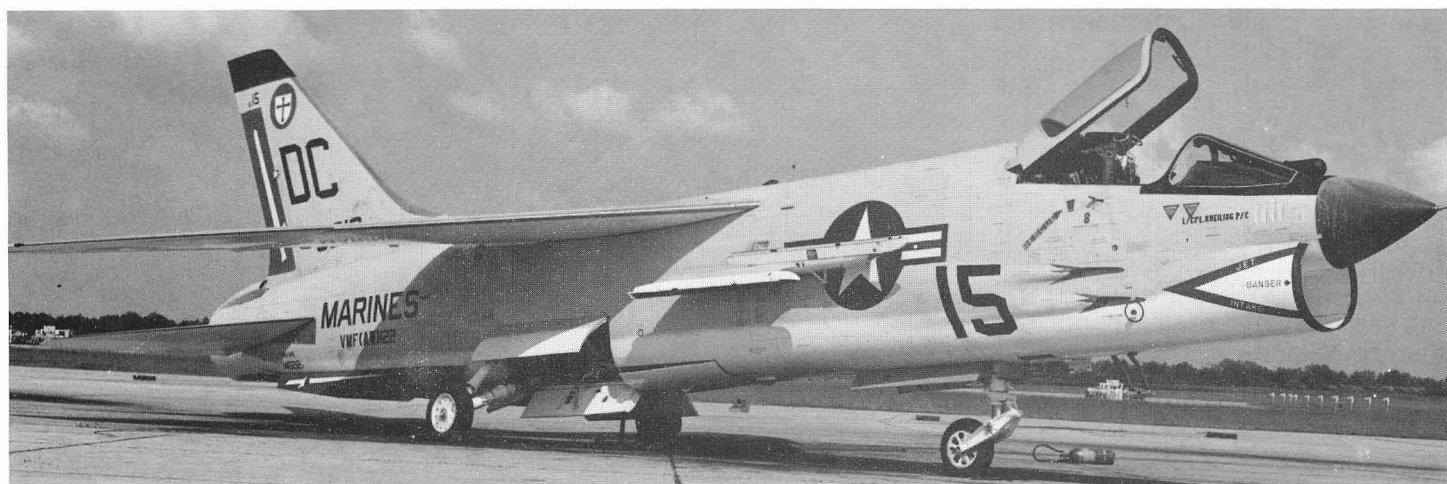




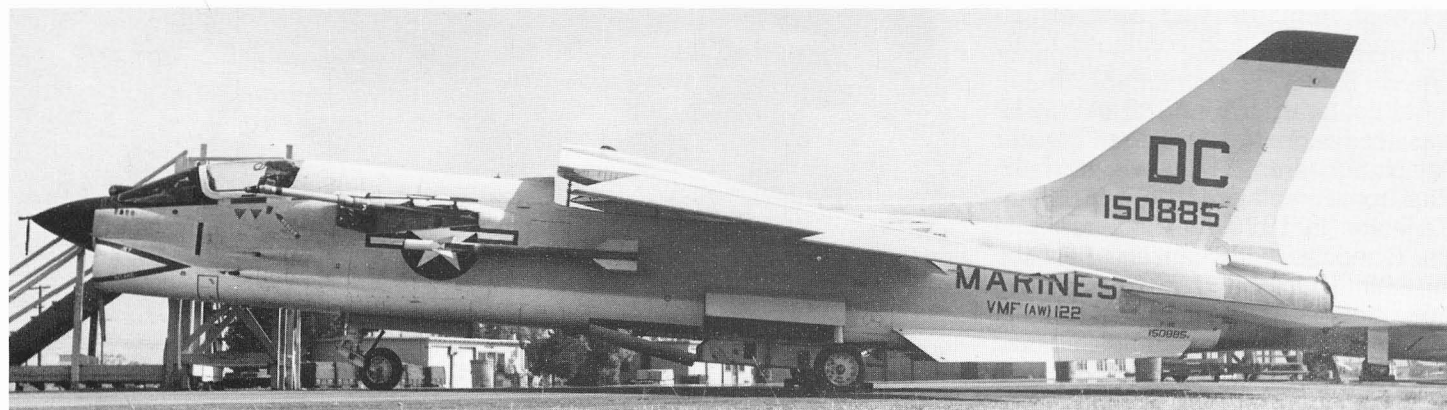
F8U-1E (F-8B) 145520 with blue-colored practice sidewinder on 5-12-62 (Besecker)



F-8Es replaced the F-8Bs in October 1962; note painted afterburner. (USMC via Roos)



F-8E 149212 with "VMF(AW)-122" added and blue rudder and ventral fin with white lance. Note blue gun troughs. (USMC via Roos) F-8E 150885 with temporary VMF(AW)-122 markings. Aircraft was assigned to the squadron during its transition to the F-4B at El Toro in May 1965. (Clay Jansson)



MARINE ALL WEATHER FIGHTER SQUADRON TWO ONE TWO VMF (AW)-212 "LANCERS"

Marine Fighter Squadron 212 (VMF-212) was activated on 1 March 1942 at MCAS Ewa, Hawaii. The squadron's F4F Wildcats scored 64-1/2 kills during their first combat tour. The second combat tour started in June 1943 with F4U-1A Corsairs. The "Devil Cats" were flying the F4U-4 Corsairs at the cessation of hostilities in the Pacific and were credited with 132-1/2 aircraft destroyed.

The squadron transferred to MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina, in February 1946 while still flying the F4U-4. The Korean war broke out and the "Devil Cats" deployed to Korea, where on 20 September 1950 they conducted combat operations at Kimpo Airfield, flying the F4U-5. On 9 June 1952 the squadron was redesignated Marine Attack Squadron 212 (VMA-212). In 1954 VMA-212 transitioned to the AD Skyraider and relocated to MCAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, in April 1955. The Skyraiders were replaced in 1957 with North American FJ-4B Furies.

On 1 July 1963 VMA-212 was redesignated Marine Fighter squadron 212 (VMF-212) when F-8B Crusaders replaced the FJ-4Bs. With the transition to the F-8, the "Devil Cats" changed their name to "Lancers", and on 1 July 1964 became Marine All Weather Fighter Squadron 212 (VMF(AW)-212) when they reequipped with F-8Ds. In January 1965, 212 transitioned into the newer F-8E and set sail onboard the USS Oriskany (CVA-34) in April 1965 for the Marines' only F-8 combat carrier cruise. The "Lancers" returned from the War zone on 10 December 1965 and continued to fly the Crusader until 1 March 1968.

On 1 March 1968 VMF (AW)-212 was redesignated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 212 when the F-4B Phantom replaced the F-8E at Kaneohe. In 1970 the F-4S replaced the B model. The "Lancers" flew the F-4S until October 1988 when they transitioned to McDonnell's F-18 Hornet. Training was completed and the squadron became fully operational with the Hornet in March 1989.



Three VMF(AW)-212 F-8Ds (147048 #13, 148660 #9, 148662 #3) over the Pacific off of Southern California in 1964. (USMC via Jansson)



VMF(AW)-212, THE CRUSADER AND THE CVW-16

ORISKANY CRUISE

**BY LT. COL DICK BROWN
USMC (RET)**

The F-8 Crusader was truly a fighter pilot's fighter – single seat, good visibility, great cockpit, fast and honest. It always told you if you were mis-handling or pushing the airframe beyond its limits. I flew three versions of the Crusader while assigned to VMF-212: the pure day fighter F8U-1E (F-8B), the night and all-weather F8U-2N (F-8D), and the night and all-weather fighter/ground attack F8U-2NE (F-8E).

When I joined the Lancers in 1963, I learned that VMF-212 would be assigned to a Navy carrier air wing for a WestPac cruise. Therefore our training schedule was tailored with that in mind. In April 1964 we transitioned from the F-8B to the "D" model which had a large radar scope and was a little slower than the "B" model. The F-8D was directionally more stable than the "B" due to the addition of the fuselage mounted ventral fins. As we began in earnest to acquire the ability to use the radar in an all-weather environment I became convinced that a radar intercept officer would have been a welcome addition to my cockpit.

Additionally, we commenced field mirror landing practice (FMLP) in August 1964, in preparation for day Car-quals (on board) the USS Hancock (CVA-19) in September. As a unit the squadron had few, if any, pilots who had ever been aboard in a jet, let alone an F-8. Day quals seemed to go relatively well for all concerned, with the exception of our LSO, Jose' Baldwin, who had the distinction of hitting a #2 wire whose arresting engine two-blocked, tearing the complete tailhook assembly from his F-8D, and deposited plane and pilot into the Molokai straights off of Hawaii.

The September day-quals turned into night-quals aboard the USS Midway (CVA-41) a month later, and I can honestly say that the men were separated from the boys in this evolution. There is not a more demanding task than operating aboard an aircraft carrier at night.



F-8D 148670 vents fuel off of Southern California in 1964. (USMC via Jansson)

By October 1964 Attack Carrier Airwing 16 (CVW-16) aboard the USS Oriskany (CVA-34) had been identified as the unit VMF(AW)-212 would be assigned to. Furthermore the escalating situation in South East Asia had changed the Lancers' mission to both air-to-air and air-to-ground missions. To accomplish the new air-to-ground aspect of our mission we transitioned to the F-8E Crusader, complete with hard point wings for air-to-ground weapons.

By January 1965 the transition was complete and the squadron was on its way to NAS Miramar with twelve F-8Es. The trip to NAS Miramar via two in-flight refuelings was uneventful save for rough air at the first refueling point. The F-8 isn't the easiest aircraft for aerial refueling because the probe is located abeam the pilots head and you have to use peripheral vision when attempting to successfully hook up to the tanker. This isn't the easiest thing to do in the daytime, let alone at night. This process was further complicated because the F-8 did not have the greatest throttle response and therefore required very smooth stick control.

Upon joining CVW-16, it was confirmed that we would be involved in both air-to-air and air-to-ground missions while deployed in South East Asia. Having never employed the F-8 in the air-to-ground mode, significant training was undertaken by the aircrews and maintenance personnel. Air-to-ground rocketry as well as strafing missions were flown out of Miramar as well as off the carrier. The aircraft was a good platform for both rockets and guns, however no training was received in either the delivery of bombs or napalm, both of which were later

employed in South East Asia.

By the time everyone was comfortable with the F-8 in the carrier landing environment we were introduced to the latest device to make Crusader carrier landings less demanding. This was the approach power compensator (APC) or auto throttle. This device definitely made flying the backside of the power curve a bit easier, at least for the neophyte Marines.

VMF(AW)-212 departed San Diego on board the USS Oriskany on 5 April 1965 and arrived off the Vietnamese coast on 8 May. As we were to find out, we had to learn to deliver both bombs and napalm, which all of our pilots became rather adept to in on-the-job training over South Vietnam. Our F-8Es were capable of carrying the MK-82 (500 lb.), MK-83 (1000 lb.), MK-84 (2000 lb.) and MK-79 (napalm) bombs. As the ship was moved to Yankee Station, missions over North Vietnam took on a more serious note, because they definitely shot back. On 5 November 1965 Captain Harlan P. Chapman was shot down by ground fire while on a bombing run over the Hai Duong rail and highway bridge and was held in captivity until 12 February 1973.

The Navy was having some difficulty dropping some of the larger bridges that were encountered in North Vietnam, and to aid in that effort, 212 became the airwing's "heavy haulers". Major Harry Sexton, the Lancer's operations officer, got together with the ship's catapult crew and determined that the F-8E, loaded with a 75-80% fuel load, could be catapulted with two 2,000 lb. general purpose MK-84 bombs with a catapult end speed that bordered on the minimum to sustain flight.

The F-8E in that configuration,

with burner and 30+ knots over the deck took a surprisingly smooth cat shot. Once airborne, the 212 "bombers" then vectored to the airborne tankers to top off the tanks that were short loaded for the launch.

The tricky part of carrying the 2000 pounders was the delivery. We had to use the gunsight with its fixed mil rings, vice an adjustable bomb sight, like on the A-4s, to get ourselves on target. Also, we had switch problems which necessitated the use of the jettison switch for weapons release. In other words, you jettisoned the right wing followed by the left as fast as you could move the switch, while holding dive angle, airspeed and the proper mil lead on the target.

Surprisingly, we had several excellent hits for such a Rube Goldberg arrangement. One such success occurred on 7 October 1965 when we attacked the Vu Chua railroad bridge, located between Hanoi and the Red China border. Our

dropped the northern end of the bridge river leaving the remainder twisted off its foundation. The mission was so successful that the other strike craft were diverted to secondary targets.

We always were prepared to multiple rolls even on air-to-ground missions. Our F-8s always carried at least 2 sidewinders and a full load of 20 millimeter cannon shells. Our maintenance crews made an in-house change to our firing circuits so that the guns could be fired in pairs instead of all four at once. This was done, for example, if we were on a flack suppression mission with 2.75" rockets and 20MM. We only used the upper or lower guns on the mission, and saved half the rounds for the air-to-air mission that might be needed eight F-8Es loaded with two 2,000 lb. bombs rolled in on the first run and

on the return to the ship.

Several unique firsts were accomplished while 212 was attached to CVW-16. In addition to the afore mentioned bombs and guns setup, our skipper, Lt. Col. Chuck Ludden, became the first Marine officer to command a carrier airwing. This event was necessitated when the CVW-16 Commander, Navy Commander James Stockdale, was shot down, captured and became a prisoner of war.

In November 1965, the Oriskany completed its West Pac deployment and sailed for home. On 10 December VMF(AW)-212 returned to MCAS Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, with numerous accolades for our performance during our cruise. The squadron was credited with flying 3,018 combat hours and 1,588 combat sorties; 2,000 hours and 1,000 missions were flown over

VMF(AW)-212 F-8E 150654 taxis to forward catapult of the USS Oriskany (CVA-34) in late 1965 loaded with 2,000 lb. bombs prior to a mission over Viet Nam. 150344 is also loaded with 2,000 pounders and 150665 is loaded with 2.75 FFAR pods and sidewinders. Ventral fins are blue with white lance and shield. A blue fin stripe above the rudder has a white iron cross on it. Note pineapple painted on rudder. (Harry Sexton)



North Vietnam. All squadron pilots became Centurions aboard the Oriskany, signifying at least 100 landings on the ship. The squadron

was further honored when Lt. Col. Ludden was named Marine aviator of the year for 1965 when he received the Marine Corps Cunningham

Award and when 212 received the Commandant's "E" (Efficiency) Award in 1966.

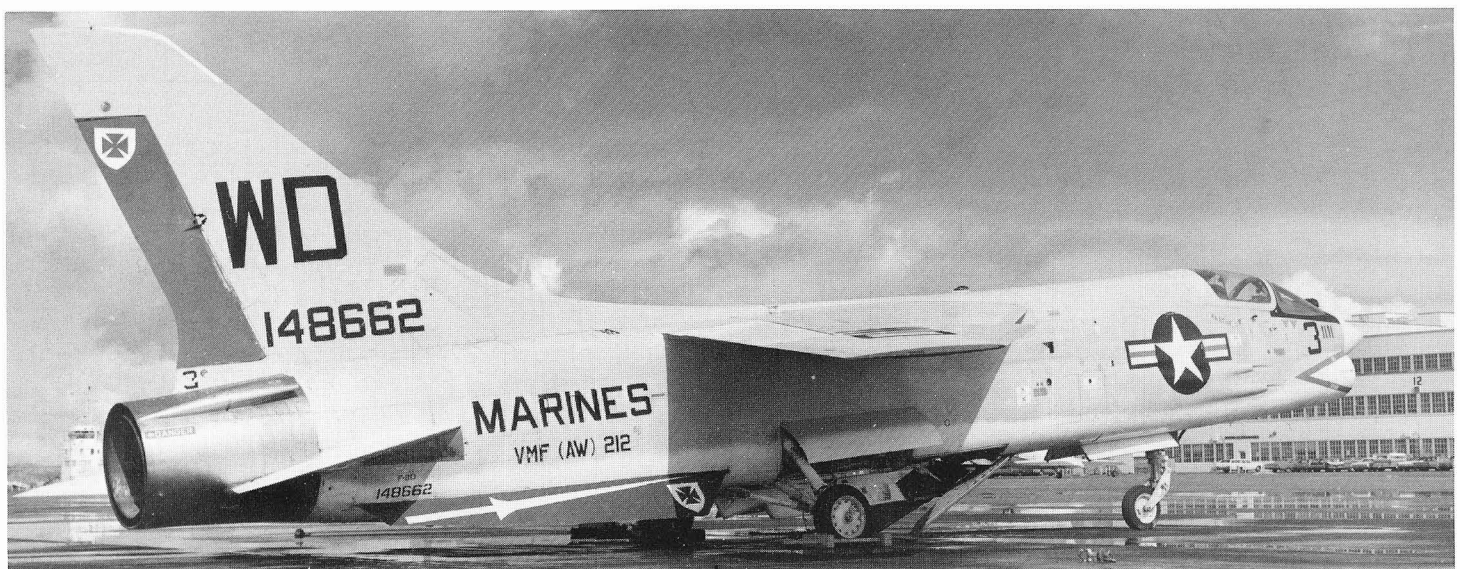
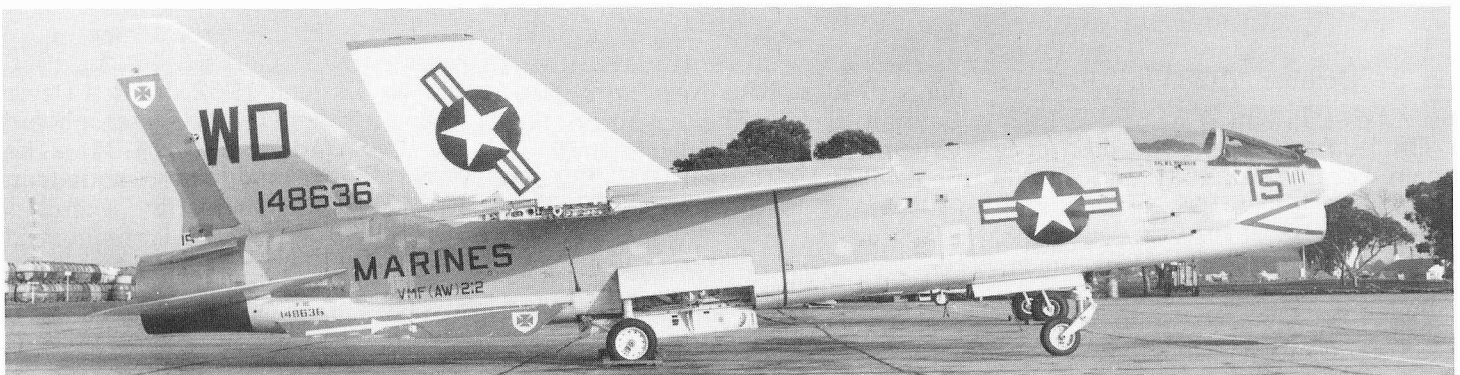


VFM(AW)-212 CVA-34 squadron photo. Back left to right; 1st. Lt. Joos, Capt. Chapman(POW), 1st. Lt. Bollenbach, Capt. Lutes, Capt. Dolan, Capt. Chaimson, 1st Lt. Piel. Front left to right; 1st. Lt. Blanch, 1st. Lt. Gattis, Capt. Brown, Maj. Sexton, Lt. Col. Ludden (CO), Maj. Rutty (XO), 1st. Lt. Wills. (Harry Sexton)

When VMF(AW)-212 returned from its Oriskany cruise its F-8Es were switched to F-8Ds. 148636 in 1967. (Donnato via Jansson) 148662 on 4-15-67. (Swisher)



Lt. Col. Chuck Ludden became Carrier Air Wing Sixteen Commander on board the USS Oriskany when Commander James Stockdale was shot down and became a POW. (USN)





MARINE ALL WEATHER FIGHTER SQUADRON TWO THREE TWO VMF(AW)-232 "RED DEVILS"

One of the oldest squadrons in the Corps, VMF-232 was activated on 1 September 1925 at NAS San Diego, Ca. as Division One, Fighting Plane Squadron 3M (VF-3M), 2nd. Marine Aviation Group. VF-3M flew Vought VE-7SFs which were replaced by Boeing FB-1s prior to their China deployment in 1927.

On 25 June 1927 VF-3M was redesignated VF-10M and on 1 July 1928 VF-10M became VF-6M. The squadron returned to NAS San Diego on 31 October 1928. In 1929 the FB-1 was replaced by Boeing FB-5s.

On 1 July 1930 the squadron once again became VF-10M and shortly thereafter replaced the FB-5s with Curtiss F6C-4 Hawks. In late 1932 F4B-4s replaced the F6C-4s and the squadron was awarded the Herbert H. Schiff Memorial Cup.

On 1 July 1933 "Fighting Ten" was redesignated Bombing Plane Squadron 4M (VB-4M). In June 1935 the F4B-4s were replaced with Great Lake BG-1 bombers and on 1 July 1937 the squadron became Marine Bombing Squadron 2 (VMB-2). The BG-1s were replaced by Douglas SBD-1 Dauntless bombers in late 1940.

VMB-2 transferred to MCAS Ewa, Hawaii, on 11 January 1941 in response to the increased tension in the Pacific. On 1 July 1941 VMB-2 became Marine Scout-Bombing Squadron 232 (VMSB-232). The squadron operated from Guadalcanal from 20 August 1942 until 13 October 1942 and then returned to CONUS on 18 November 1942. While stationed at MCAS El Toro,



Ca., the SBDs were replaced by TBF-1 Avengers. Receipt of the TBFs brought about a designation change on 1 June 1943, to Marine Torpedo Bombing Squadron 232 (VMTB-232). On 16 July 1943 the squadron returned to the Pacific. Starting out at Espiritu Santo VMTB-232 island-hopped its way to Kadena Airfield, Okinawa. The squadron left Okinawa for San Diego on 31 October 1945 and was subsequently decommissioned on 16 November.

The Red Devils were reactivated as Marine Fighter Squadron 232 (VMF-232), Marine Corps Reserve on 3 June 1948 at NAS New York (Floyd Bennett Field). The squadron flew Grumman F6F-5 Hellcats until 18 September 1950 when VMF-232 was called to active duty in response to the Korean War. October would find the Red Devils at MCAS El Toro transitioning to Vought F4U-4 Corsairs.

In March 1953 the Corsairs were replaced by Grumman F9F-2 Panthers as the Red Devils entered the jet age. On 4 January 1954 the squadron transferred to MCAS Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, and later replaced their dash two Panthers with F9F-5s. Transition to North American FJ-2 Furys took place in 1955, which were in turn replaced by FJ-4 Furys in 1957. The squadron deployed to NAS Atsugi, Japan, on 8 September 1958 and operated off the USS Bennington (CVS-40). On 15 March 1959 the squadron returned to Hawaii where the FJ-4s were replaced by Vought F8U-1 (F-8A) Crusaders.

Late in 1959 the squadron underwent gunnery training at MCAS Yuma, AZ. The training was conducted with borrowed aircraft,



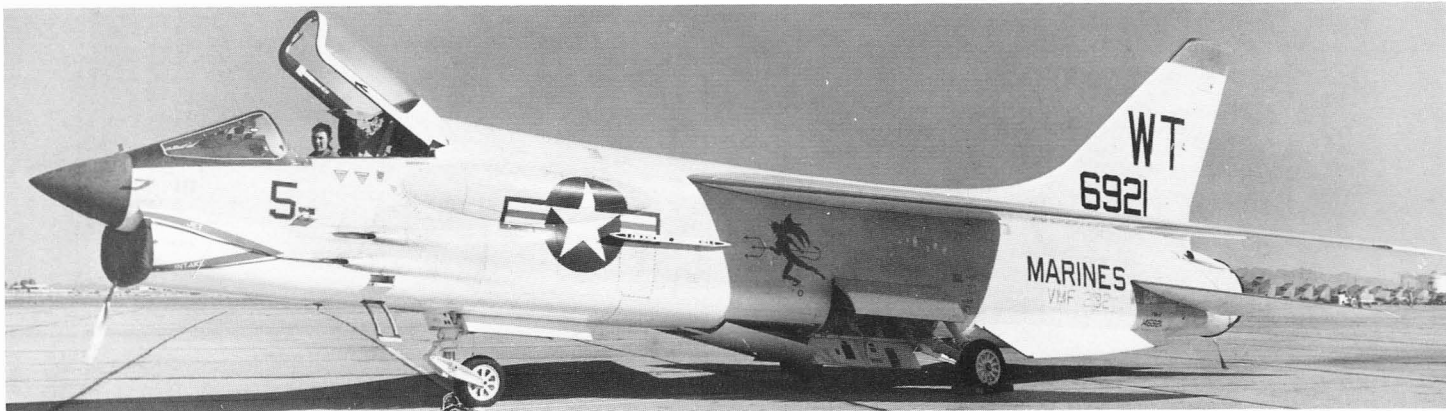
VMF-232 F8U-1Es (F-8Bs) during carrier qualifications. (USN)

F8U-2s (F-8C), and the squadron's designation tail code and Red Devil were applied to the loaners. With only two weeks to prepare, the Red Devils entered the 1959 Yuma weapons meet and won the Earle Young Trophy for day fighters as well as the Bauer Trophy for the high individual score. 1st Lt. Gary A. Davis won with 4300 points with squadron member Capt. R.L. Iverson taking second with 2915 points.

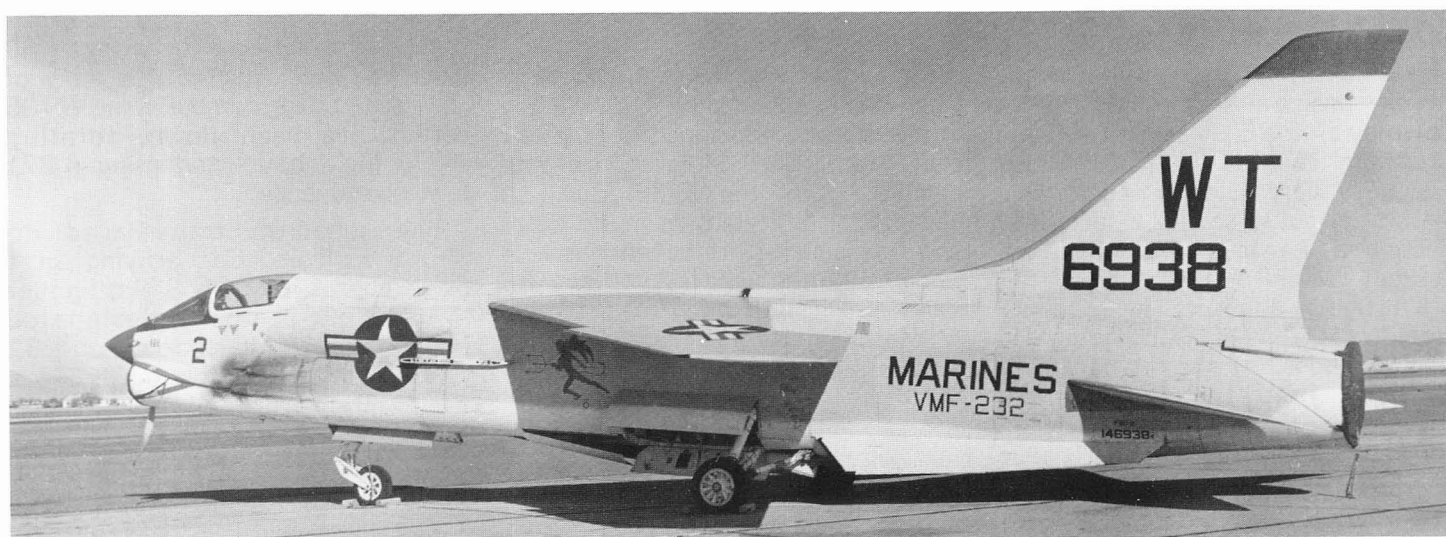
The F8U-1 Crusaders were replaced by F8U-1Es (F-8B) in 1960 and on 12 June 1962 the Red Devils took their first F-8Bs to sea aboard the USS Oriskany (CVA-34). The deployment saw the squadron conducting anti-air warfare exercises in and around the Philippines and NAS Atsugi until returning to Hawaii on 11 December 1962.

In 1965 F-8Ds replaced the F-8Bs and the squadron was redesignated Marine All-Weather Fighter Squadron 232 (VMF(AW)-232) on 1 March 1965 to reflect the increased capabilities of the F-8D. Due to the build-up in Vietnam VMF(AW)-232 departed Kaneohe for MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, arriving on 2 September 1966. By December the squadron had completed its move to Da Nang Air Base, Vietnam, and had replaced the F-8Ds with F-8E Crusaders. The F-8Es had a wing pylon under each wing and, unlike the Navy Crusader, was used primarily for ground attack.

VMF(AW)-232's combat area of operations was mainly the I and II Corps area as well as portions of the area north of the DMZ. The squadron maintained a lucky streak until May 1967 with only 23 aircraft

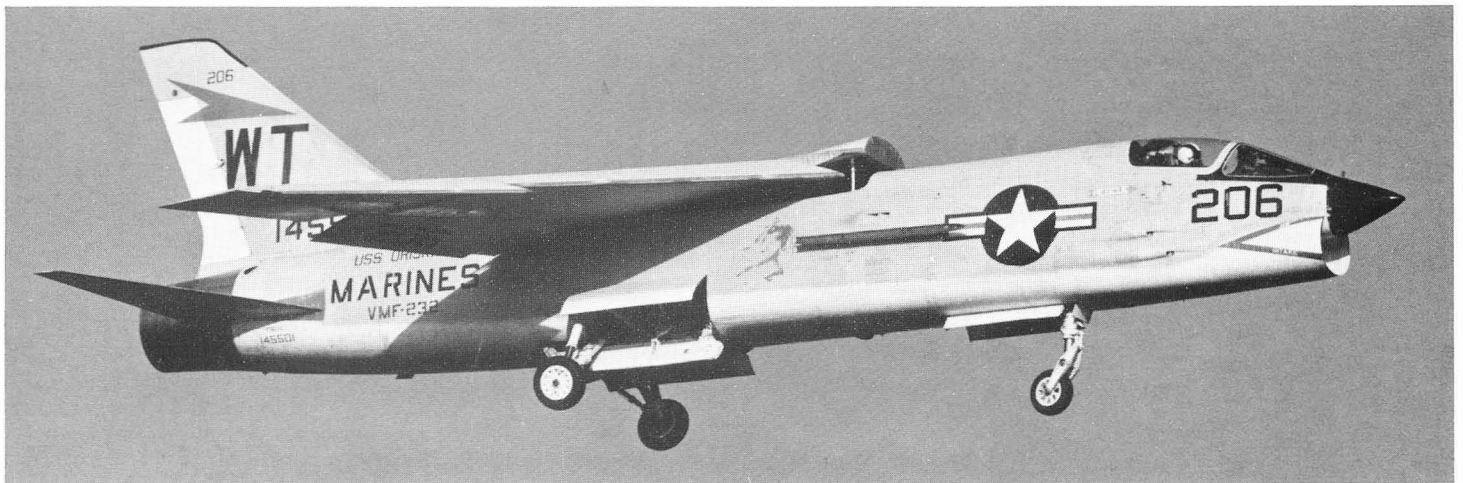


Two F8U-2s (F-8Cs) on loan to VMF-232 for the Yuma weapons meet which they won in 1959. The devil on the fuselage is red. (Swisher)



F8U-1 (F-8A) 144428 and F8U-1Es (F-8Bs) 145533, 145542, and 145539 off the Hawaiian coast on 7-10-60; checkmark on tail is red outlined in white. (USN)





being hit by small arms rounds. On 4 May 1967 while circling a suspected enemy position Major Edward F. Townley's F-8E was hit. The Crusader caught fire but Major Townley was able to coax the stricken jet out to sea for a successful ejection and rescue. On May 19th Captain Harold J. Hellback was hit while flying a direct air support mission and while attempting to reach the coast, hit the ground about six miles from the target. The

squadron's third aircraft loss and second fatality occurred on 21 June when Major Charles L. Cronkrite, a former 232 pilot assigned to MAG-11 staff, was killed. Major Cronkrite ejected from his F-8E due to mechanical difficulties over the water and was believed to be unconscious when he hit the water. Another F-8E was lost July 2nd when Major Bruce A. Martin ejected successfully after his plane was hit. Two more aircraft were lost in July due to a Vietcong

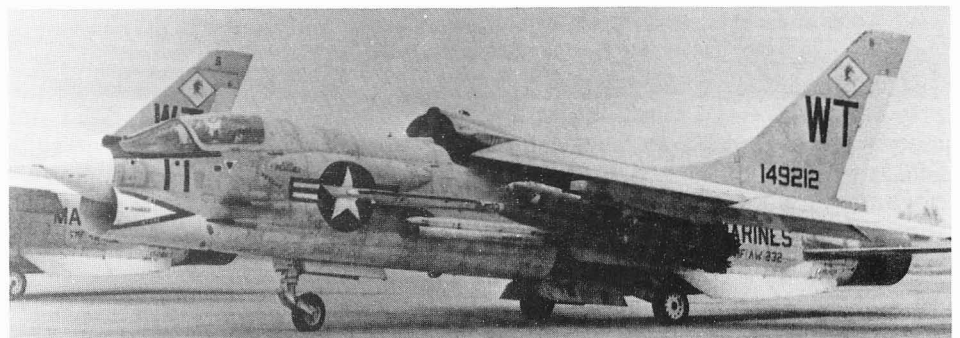
rocket attack on Da Nang. 30 August 1967 marked the end of VMF(AW)-232's combat tour. 5,785 sorties has been flown, totaling 7,273 flight hours and using 6,271 tons of ordnance.

The squadron trans-Paced to MCAS El Toro, Ca., arriving on 1 September 1967. On 8 September VMF(AW)-232 was redesignated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232 (VMFA-232), and replaced its F-8Es with McDonnell F-4J Phantom IIs

F8U-1E (F-8B) 145501 of VMF-232 from the USS Oriskany (CVA-34) over NAS Atsugi on 10-9-62. (T. Matsuzaki)

F-8E 149212 loaded with eight 500 lb. snakeyes prepares for a mission over Viet Nam. (USN)

F-8E 150316 of VMF(AW)-232 launches on a 3-10-67 scramble mission in support of Marine ground forces 17 miles south of Da Nang. Armament consists of eight 500 lb. snakeyes and two dual Zuni tubes used exclusively on F-8s. (USMC)





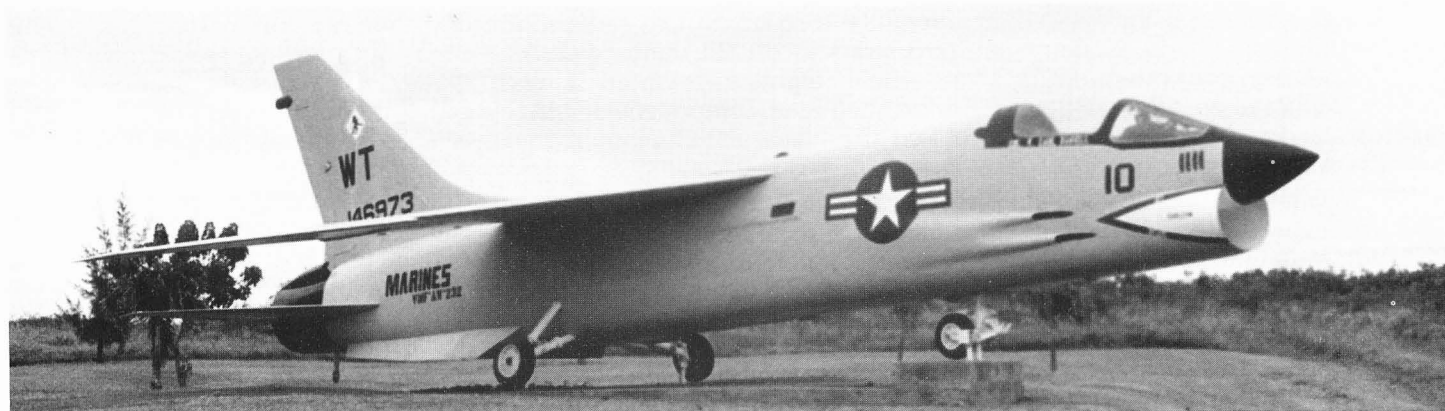
shortly thereafter. The squadron's F-4s conducted two combat tours in Vietnam in 1969 and 1972/73. In 1979 F-4Ss replaced the J model and these were still being used in 1988 prior to replacement by F-18 Hornets in April 1989.



Two VMF(AW)-232 F-8Es at NAS North Island in late 1967 await overhaul and rework prior to being reassigned to Navy squadrons. 150329 is shown on 11-15-67. (Jansson) 150871 on 8-26-67. (Swisher) F-8K (upgraded F-8C) 146973 is the gate guard at MCAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, and is painted in a bogus overall grey VMF(AW)-232 color scheme in 1988. (Ginter)

VMF(AW)-232

"RED DEVILS"



MARINE ALL WEATHER FIGHTER SQUADRON TWO THREE FIVE VMF(AW)-235 "DEATH ANGELS"

Marine Scout Bombing Squadron 235 (VMSB-235) was commissioned on 1 January 1943 at MCAS El Centro, California, and after three months of training the Death Angels departed for MCAS Ewa, Hawaii. 6 July 1943 found the squadron's SBD-5 Dautlesses operating from Espiritu Santo. A move to Guadalcanal occurred on 1 September 1943 and three days later VMSB-235 flew its first combat mission. With their first mission behind them the Death Angels went on to participate in the following World War II campaigns: New Georgia, Bougainville, Bismark Archipelago and the Northern Solomons. VMSB-235 returned to the United States via San Francisco on 18 October 1944 and was decommissioned at MCAS Miramar on 10 November 1944.

VMSB-235 was reactivated as Marine Fighting Squadron 235 on 15 November 1946 at Squantum, Massachusetts. VMF-235 was assigned to the Marine Air Reserve Training Command and flew Chance Vought F4U Corsairs. The Death Angels conducted three annual summer maneuvers at MCAS Cherry Point from 1947 through 1949. The fourth annual maneuver took place on 5 August 1950 and upon completion VMF-235 was called to active duty in response to the Korean War.

On 18 September 1950 VMF-235 was called to active duty and transferred to MCAS El Toro. Once at El Toro the squadron received F4U-4 and F4U-4B Corsairs. Continuous training commenced at various installations and the F4U-4Bs were withdrawn on 2 November 1950. Training continued until 2 January 1952 when VMF-235 was transferred to MCAS Kaneohe, Hawaii. After temporary duty at Kaneohe, VMF-235 returned to El Toro via Alameda. In May 1952 the squadron returned to Kaneohe for temporary duty once again. This duty ended in August and VMF-235 returned to El Toro where they transitioned to Grumman F9F Panthers in September 1952.



VMF-235 flew the F9F-2 until March 1954 when they transitioned to the North American FJ-2 Fury. Seven months later the Death Angels were transferred to NAS Atsugi, Japan, where they were attached to MAG-11 for over two years. VMF-235 left Japan on 16 January 1957 and was reestablished at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina, on 1 February 1957.

On 30 November 1957 the squadron transferred to MCAAS Beaufort, South Carolina, where they received the new Vought F8U-1 Crusader.

Numerous times in the years 1958 through 1962 the "Death Angels" deployed southward, usually to the NAS, Leeward Point, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for training or to a fleet carrier for pilot carrier qualifications training. In February 1962, with F-8D Crusaders the squadron was reorganized and designated as Marine Fighter (All Weather) Squadron 235 (VMF(AW)-235). After a year's training and operations with the new aircraft, the squadron was reduced to zero strength on 24 January 1963; however, eight days later it was established as a component of MAG-11 at the Naval Air Station, Atsugi, Japan.

Once settled into the Far Eastern station the squadron began plans for a temporary deployment which was accomplished with a six week transfer, beginning 1 March 1963, of VMF(AW)-235 from Japan to Taiwan and which was completed with the return of the squadron to Atsugi by

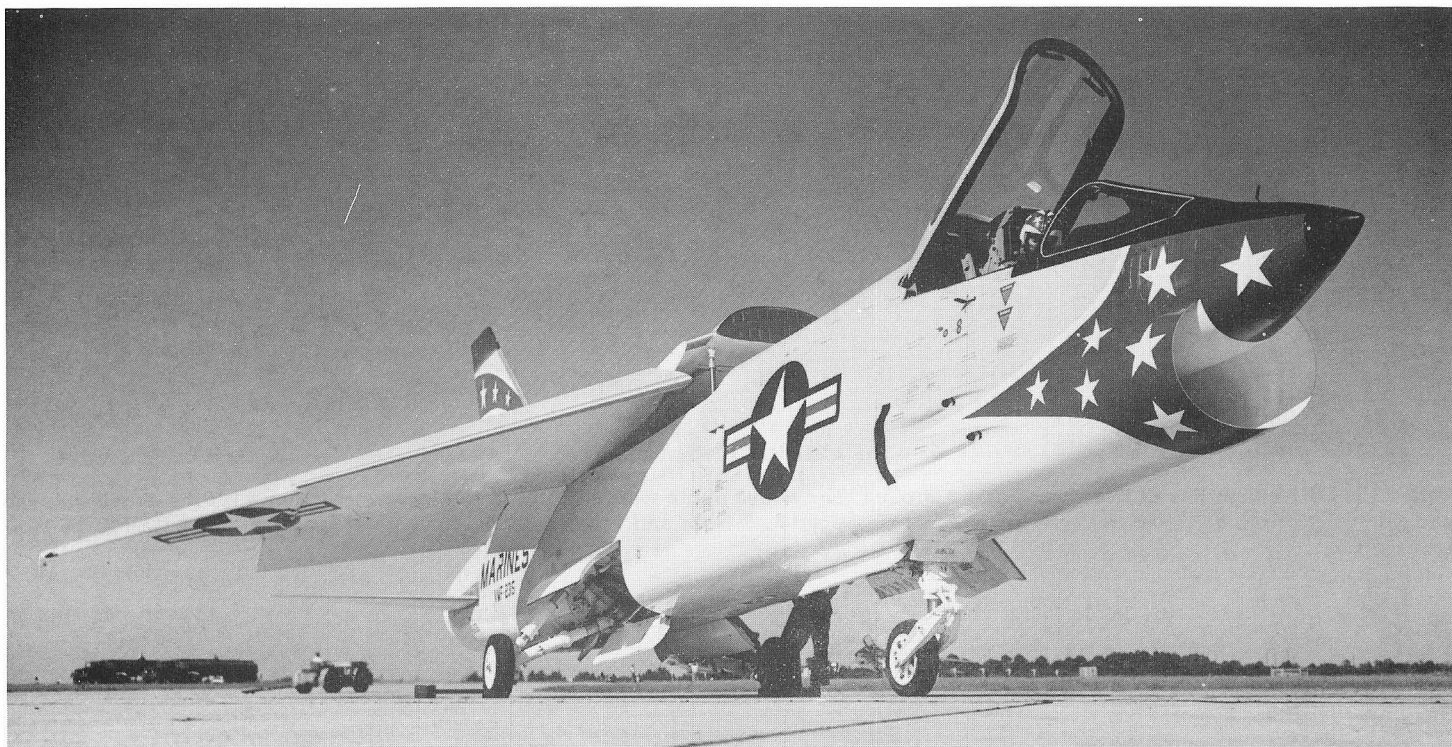


16 April. Touching base at the Naval Air Station, "Death Angels" were soon on the move again as throughout the spring and summer they deployed by echelons to other Far Eastern bases such as Okinawa for training. After a brief return to Atsugi in the later summer, the squadron once again engaged in a series of inter-theater moves until 30 November 1963. The holidays were spent in Japan; then on 1 February 1964 the squadron was reduced to zero strength, only to be reequipped, this time with F8E "Crusaders," and reestablished as a component of MAG-31 at Beaufort, South Carolina.

Back at Beaufort, 235 again set about reaching and staying at the high level of operational efficiency which had characterized it for nearly 25 years. Elsewhere in the world, the situation deteriorated rapidly, especially in the Republic of Vietnam, where limited American concern was widening into ever greater involvement which eventually led to the landing of a Marine air and ground expeditionary force in March 1965.

By mid-October 1965, VMF(AW)-235 was alerted to anticipated deployment in Vietnam. The capabilities of the squadron's F8Es made it a logical choice for deployment. It therefore spent the balance of the last quarter of 1965 in preparation for the overseas move, which took place in early December and was completed with the "Death Angels" arrival at Da Nang.

VMF(AW)-235 arrived in Vietnam on 1 February 1966 and had pilots in the air flying their first combat sortie less than 24 hours later and had flown 603 sorties by the end of the



first month.

The squadron's working components smoothed out by March and the pilots established a new monthly operational record of 806 sorties and 1027.8 flight hours. Keeping busy, the Angels flew 696 sorties in April, 663 in May and 678 in June. On 10 June, the squadron set a new record of 41 sorties in a 24-hour period.

During the latter part of April, VMF-235 was assigned the task of defending the Danang Air Base when the other squadrons were withdrawn during the Vietnamese political/military crisis. Ingenuity and creativity by squadron maintenance personnel effectively protected the parked aircraft on the airstrip, making it feasible for the squadron to remain there.

The squadron's missions on its first tour in Vietnam can be divided into five categories: (1) Flying escort and cover for combat and logistical support helicopters; (2) Providing close air support for Marine infantry units in the field; (3) Providing armed escort for Marine convoys traveling roads; (4) Providing fighter escort for Marine aerial refueling aircraft; (5) day/night all-weather bombing under control of a Marine air support radar team.

The only land-based F8E Crusader-equipped squadron in Vietnam in 1966, the squadron hammered the

North Vietnamese heavily, flying over 6,000 sorties and encompassing over 7,000 flying hours in support of 22 special operations.

The list of operations reads like a guide to the Vietnam War, including DOUBLE EAGLE (Phase I and II), TEXAS, KINGS, UTAH, INDIANA, ALABAMA, HOT SPRINGS, VIRGINIA, WYOMING, OREGON, GEORGIA, OSAGE, CHEROKEE MORGAN, MONTGOMERY, WAYNE, YUMA, MOBILE CHEYENNE II, and OAKLAND.

Twice while at Da Nang, Death Angel pilots made wings-folded take-offs. The second incident occurred with a full load of two 2,000 pounders, six Zunis and a full load of 20MM. Both aircraft landed safely after jettisoning their ordinance.

On 15 November 1966, the "Angels" departed Da Nang for MCAS Iwakuni via NAS, Cubi Point, Philippines, and Naha Air Base, Okinawa. The squadron arrived at Iwakuni on 17 November, where it joined MAG-15 and the 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade.

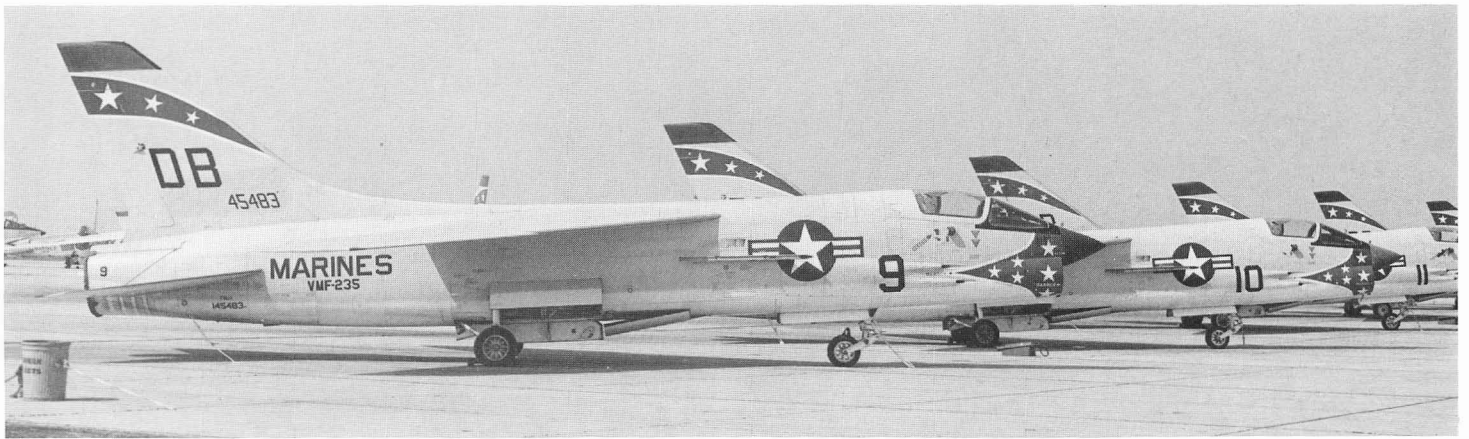
Two weeks later, on 2 December, the squadron began deployment of a training detachment to Naha Air Base for extensive air-to-ground training. The bulk of the squadron, in Japan, continued to train for eventual return to Vietnam, a movement which began on 28 January 1967 after the Okinawa detachment and

VMF-235 sported one of the most colorful schemes in the Marines as seen on this early F8U-1 (145432). Nose and tail markings are red with white stars. (USMC via W.T. Larkins)

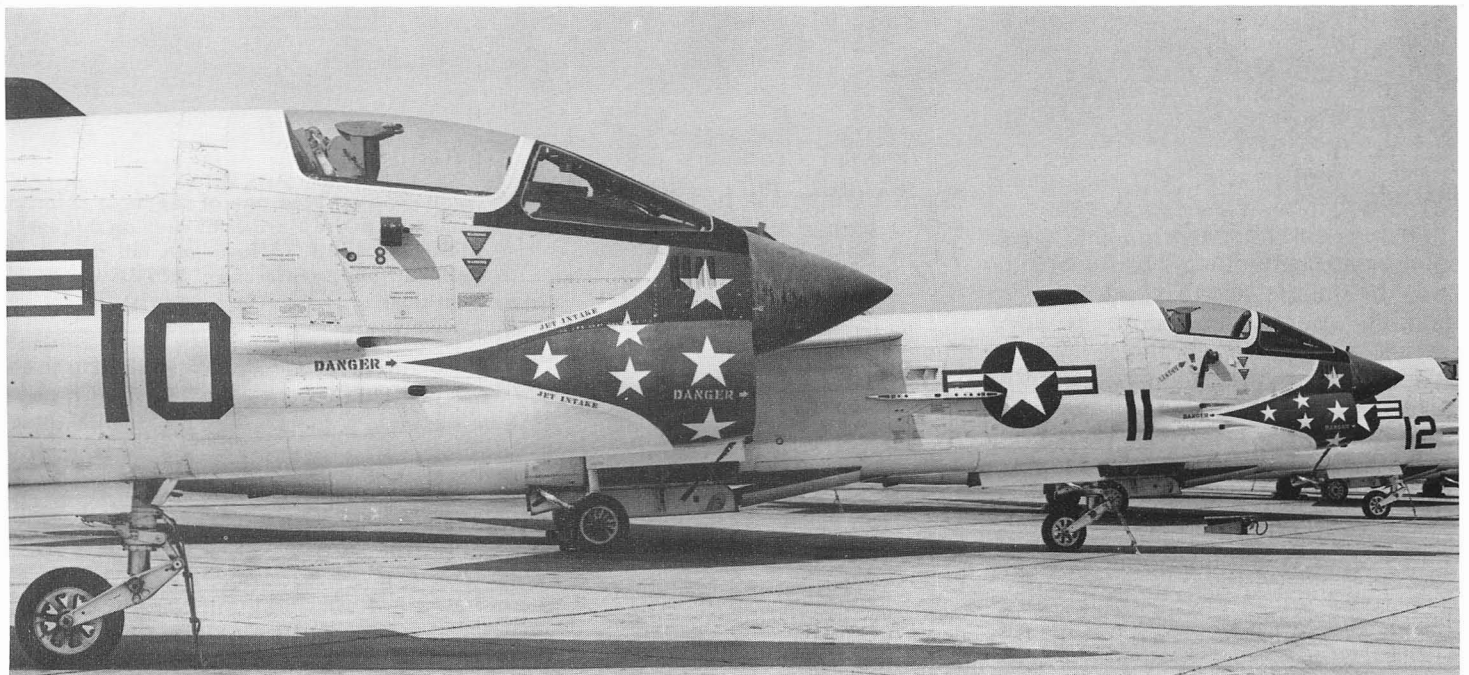
the main body of the squadron had been reunited.

By 15 February the entire squadron had returned to Da Nang and had been placed under the command of MAG-11. Nearly a year and three months later, on 11 May 1968, VMF(AW)-235 once again departed Vietnam for Iwakuni after a second successful tour in the theater of operations. Concurrently its F8Es were turned in for F8Bs which the squadron began operating from Iwakuni on 29 May 1968. While in Japan the "Death Angels" were assigned to MAG-15 of the 9th MAB and were the last squadron to fly "Crusaders" in the Marine Corps.

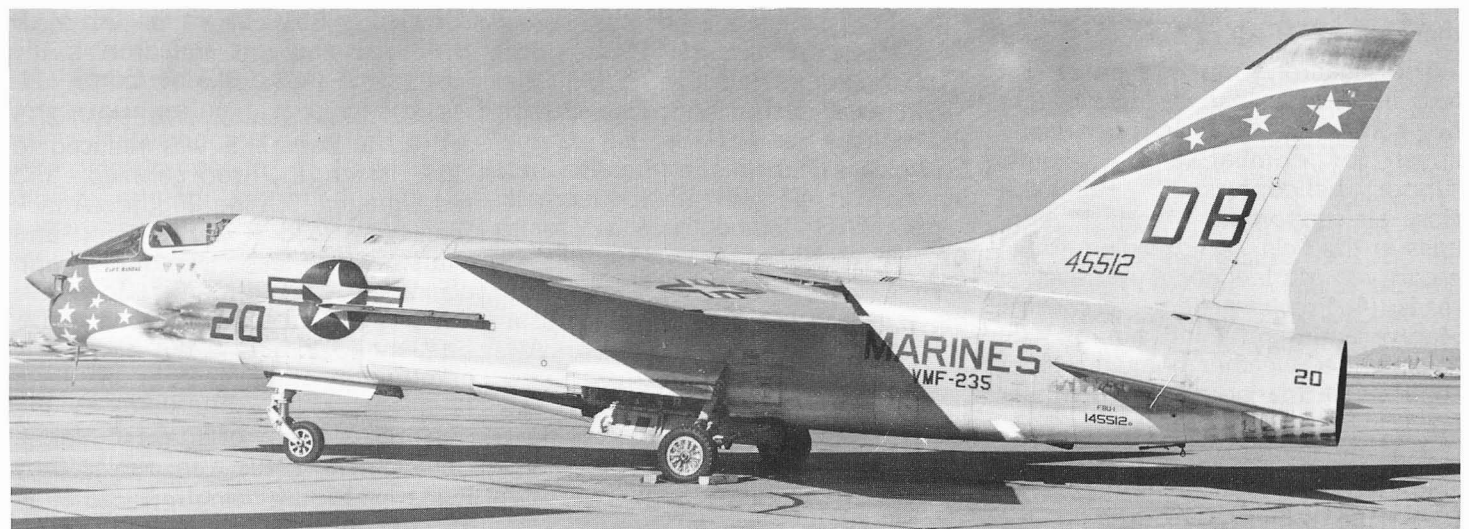
Four months after VMF(AW)-235 arrived in Japan, it was reduced to zero strength, reorganized and redesignated Marine Fighter/Attack Squadron 235 (VMFA-235), and transferred, less personnel and equipment, to the Marine Corps Air Station, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. On 6 September 1968, VMFA-235, now employing the McDonnell F-4J Phantom, was established as the principal air arm of the 1st Marine Brigade. The F-4Js were replaced by F-4Ss which are being replaced by F-18 Hornets in 1989.



VMF-235s F8U-1 flightline at Beaufort, South Carolina. The above photo with 145483 in the foreground shows off the squadron's red and white markings and the normal, partially open belly speed brakes on parked F-8s. Below close up of nose markings. (USMC via W.T. Larkins)



F8U-1 145512 from VMF-235 at Yuma on 12-3-59 for weapons trainings. Note gunpowder stains around gun ports. (Swisher)

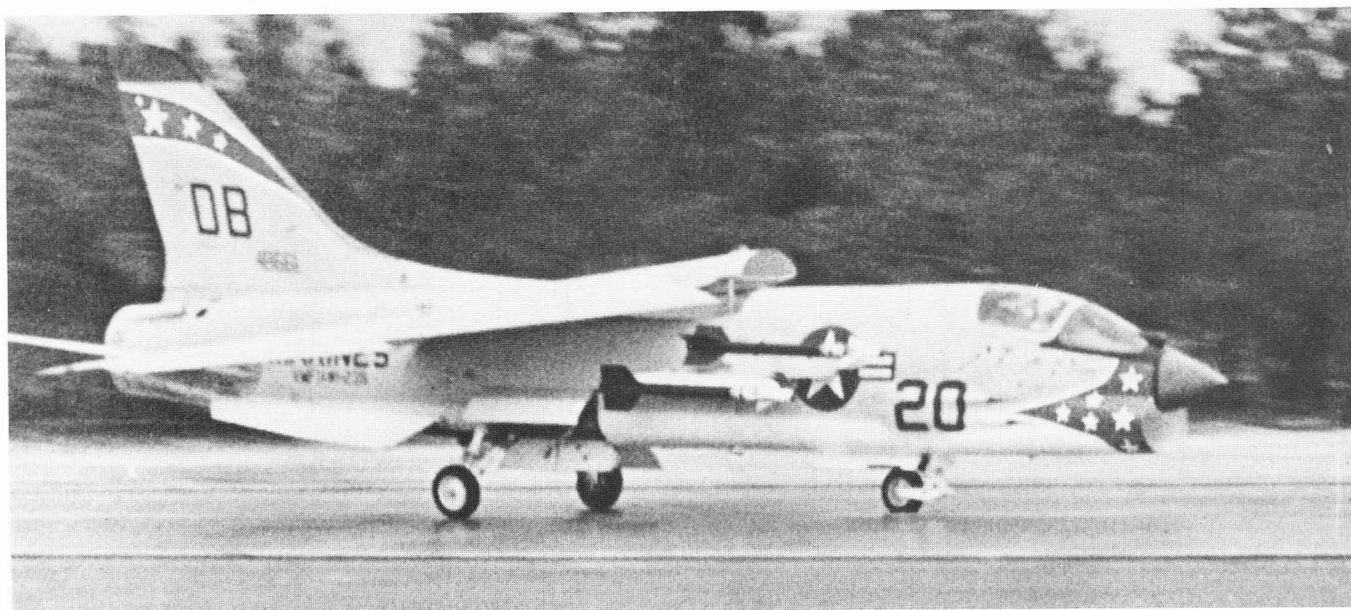




"DEATH ANGELS"

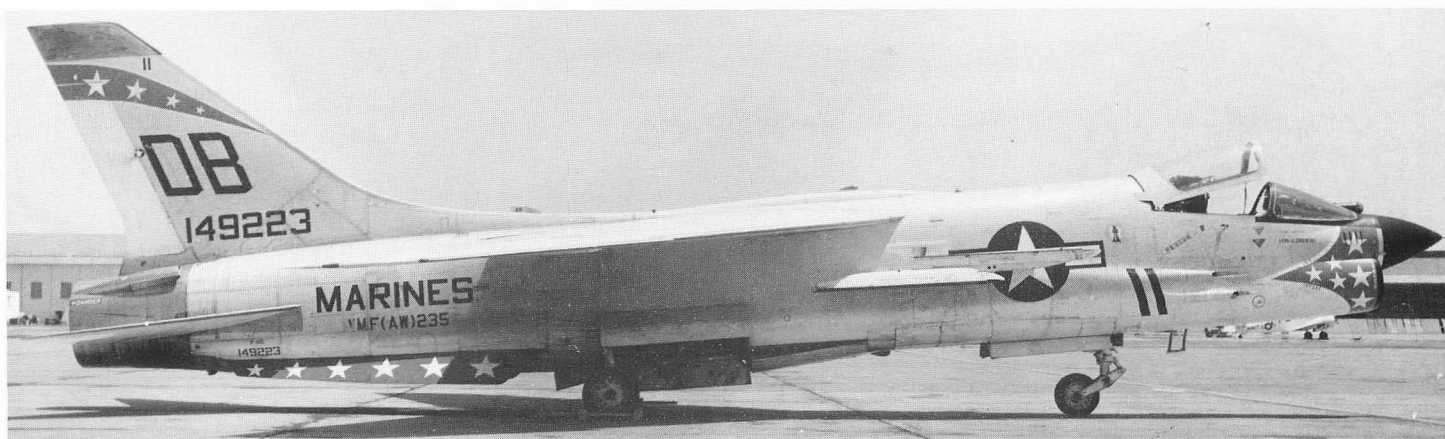


Three poor quality photos of VMF(AW)-235 F-8Ds & Es making Short Airfield Tactical landings using M-21 SATS gear. (USMC/USN)

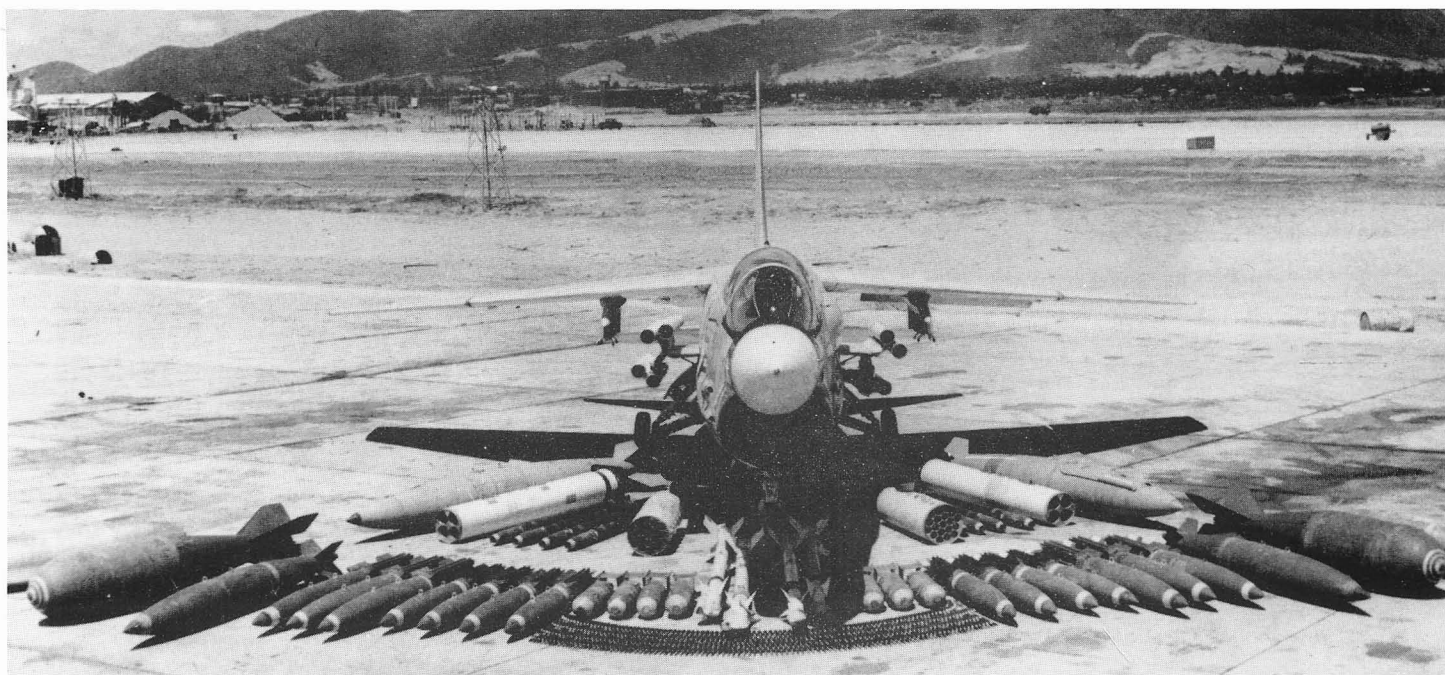




F-8D 148703 is the CO's aircraft as designated by the double zero nose numbers. The F-8D was flown in Japan prior to converting to the bomb capable F-8E used in Viet Nam. (NAS Atsugi 9-19-63 T. Matsuzaki) F-8E 149223 on 5-29-65. Note red ventral fins with white stars. (Swisher)



1966 photo of Da Nang-based VMF(AW)-235 F-8E posing with the armament it is capable of carrying. The "Y" fuselage missile rails are fitted with the F-8's unique twin tube Zuni launchers. The back row shows wing store choices of napalm, 4 tube Zuni launchers and 19 tube 2.75 folding fin rockets. Front row shows napalm, iron bombs, snakeyes and sidewinders. If multiple ejector racks are used, up to four 250 lb. or 500 lb. bombs could be carried per wing. (USMC)





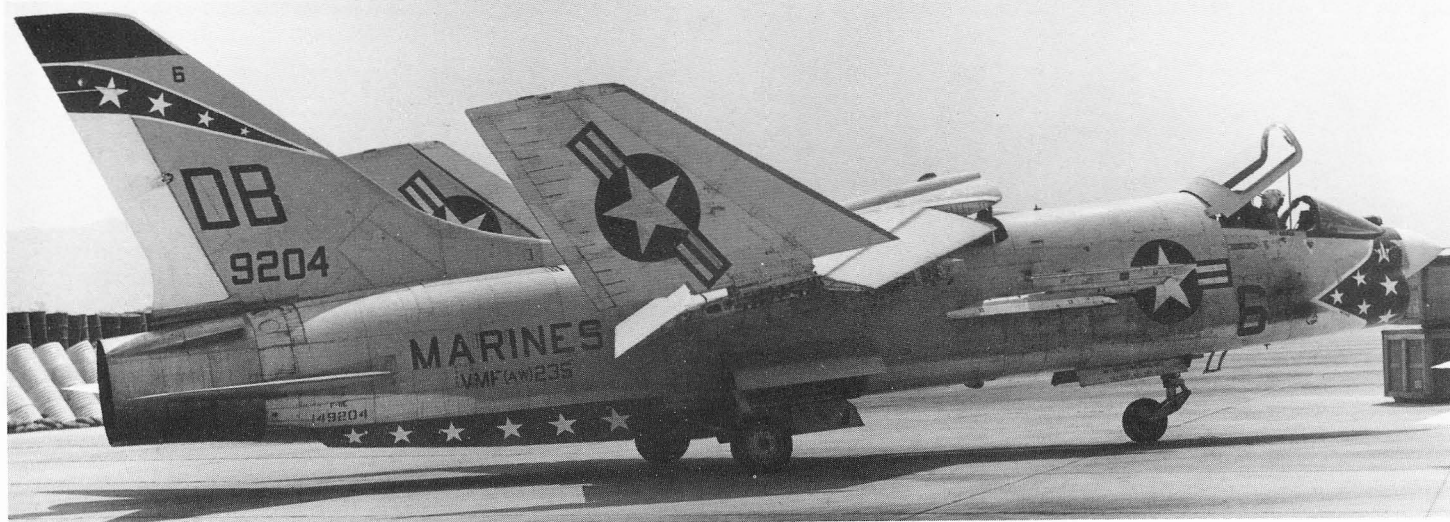
Maj. Donald E. Cathcart of VMF(AW)-235 is congratulated by Capt. R.L. Beavis after completing the squadron's 7,000th combat sortie. (USMC via Don Spering)

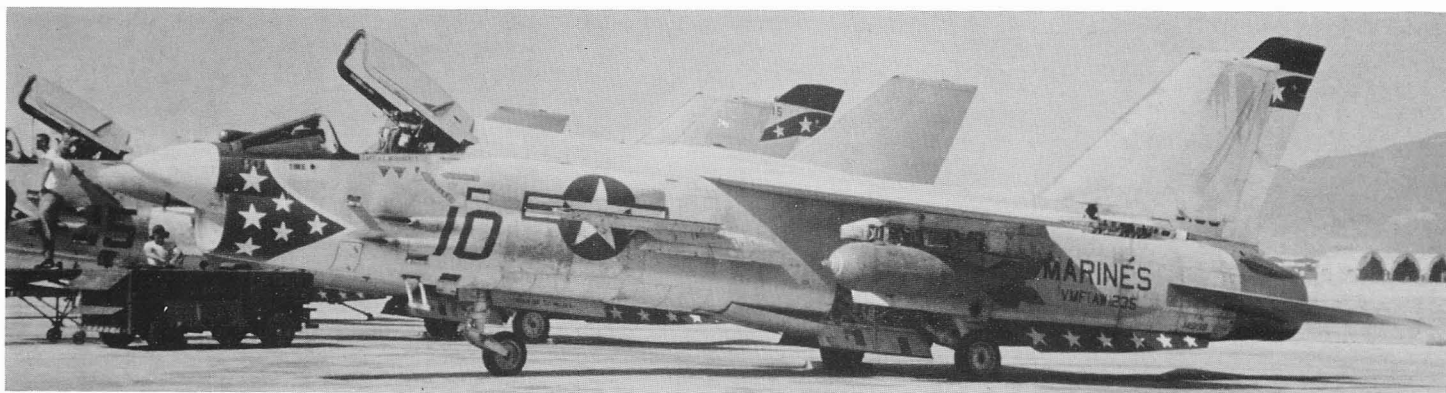


2333 Otis, Santa Ana, CA 92704

F-8E in the markings of VMF(AW)-235 armed with napalm circles a target in Viet Nam this aircraft is actually being operated by VMF(AW)-232 but has not been repainted yet. (Arthur L. Schoeni Collection via AAHS)

F-8E 149204 returns to the flight line at Da Nang after expending all its ordnance on 5-2-66 (USMC)





F-8E 149199 on the ramp at Da Nang loaded with a 1500 lb. iron bomb on each pylon. in July 1966. (via Jansson)

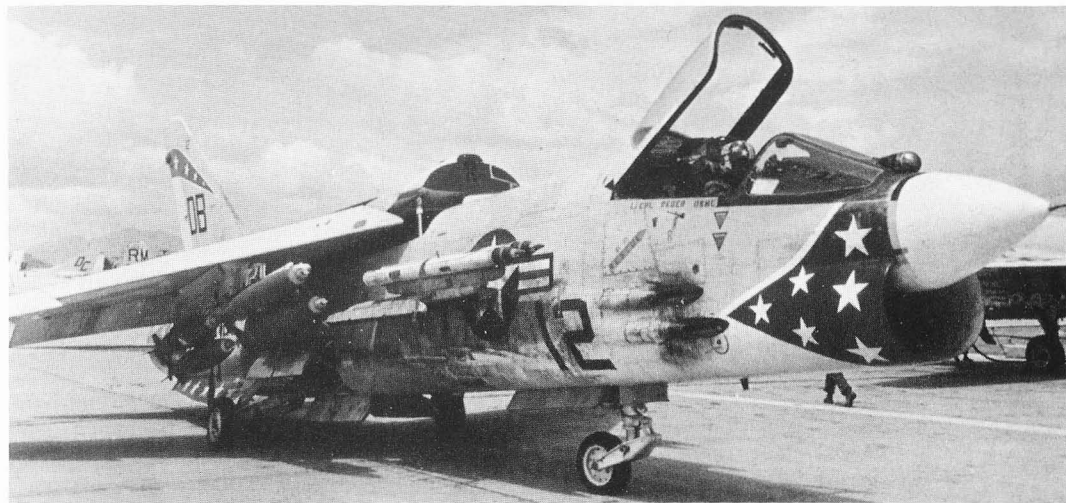
VMF(AW)-235 F-8E launches with Zunis on the "Y" racks and 2.75 rocket pods on the wings. (USMC)

VMF(AW)-235



VMF(AW)-235 F-8E on the ramp at Da Nang with 8-500 pounders and 4 Zunis. (USMC)

F-8E 150294 landing at NAS Atsugi on 1-27-67. (T. Matsuzaki)



**MARINE FIGHTER
SQUADRON
TWO FIVE ONE
VMF-251
"THUNDERBOLTS"**



Marine Fighter Squadron 251 was initially activated as Marine Observation Squadron 251 (VMO-251) at San Diego, California, on 1 December 1941. Flying the Grumman F4F Wildcats, VMO-251's mission was reconnaissance and observation. The squadron remained in San Diego until 18 June 1942 when it sailed for the Southwest Pacific where it participated in the fight for Guadalcanal from its base at Espiritu Santo. In December 1942 VMO-251 moved to Henderson Field, Guadalcanal, until returning to San Diego on 17 May 1943.

Once in California the squadron transitioned to the Chance Vought F4U Corsair. After transition training was completed VMO-251 returned to Espiritu Santo on 9 March 1944 to start its second combat tour. The Thunderbolts moved to Green Island in June and then onto Bougainville in July 1944. On 30 December 1944 VMO-251 moved to Samar Island in the Philippines and on 1 February 1945 was redesignated Marine Fighter Squadron 251 (VMF-251). On 1 June 1945 VMF-251 was deactivated on Samar Island.

On 1 July 1946 VMF-251 was reactivated as a Marine Reserve squadron at NAS Grosse Ile, Michigan. The Thunderbolts flew Corsairs until they were replaced by Douglas AD-3 Skyraiders upon their mobilization for the Korean War on 1 March 1951. The squadron moved to MCAS El Toro, California, and was redesignated Marine Attack Squadron 251 on 26 April 1951. After



completing training, VMA-251 departed for Korea on 1 June 1953. The AD-3/AD-4Bs flew from K-6 airfield at Pyongyang, Korea, until 7 January 1956 when they were transferred to MCAS Iwakuni, Japan.

On 20 April 1957 the squadron relocated to MCAS Miami, Florida, and was redesignated Marine Fighter Squadron 251 once again. VMF-251 transitioned to the North American FJ-4 Fury and transferred to El Toro on 28 April 1958.

Once reestablished at El Toro the Thunderbolts transitioned to the Chance Vought F8U-1 (F-8A) Crusader. With the Crusader came a new squadron insignia with the motto "CUSTOS CAELORUM" (guardians of the sky) incorporated on it.

After transition training was completed VMF-251 departed for NAS Atsugi onboard the USS Core on 16 October 1959. The squadron

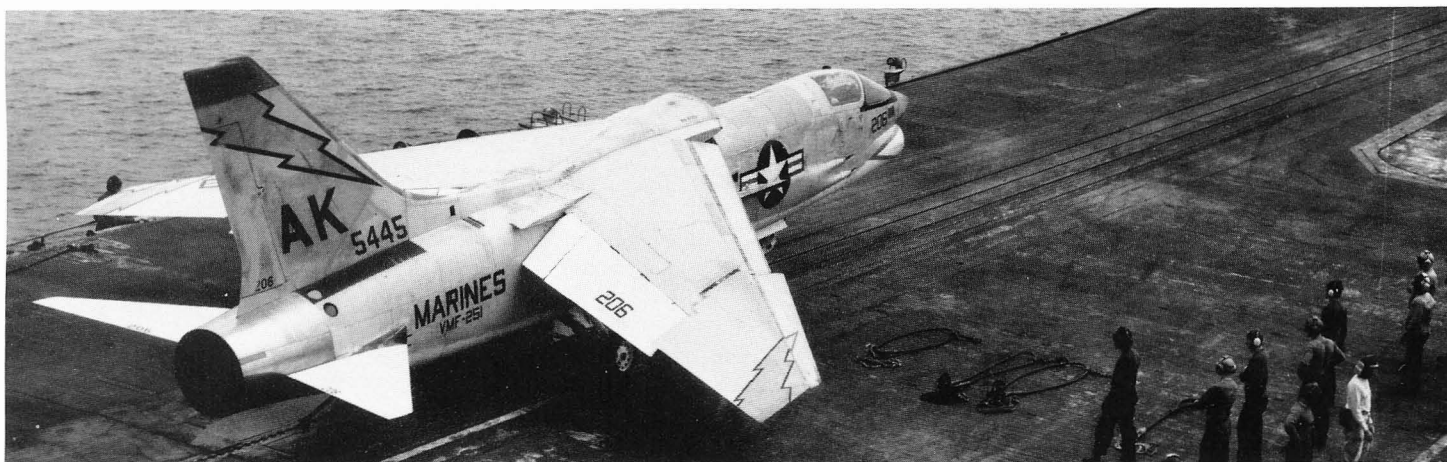
F-8A ??????? from VMF-251 in landing configuration with tan radome and flat black fin cap. (Vought)

and its twenty F8U-1s arrived in Japan on 1 November. During 1960 the Thunderbolts traded their F8U-1s in for F8U-1Es (F-8Bs) and in addition operated from January until June at NAS Cubi Point in the Philippines. VMF-251 transferred to MCAS Beaufort on 1 January 1961 and left its F8U-1Es at Atsugi to equip its replacement Squadron VMF-312.

Once at Beaufort VMF-251 took over VMF-312's 12 F8U-1s and 10 F8U-1Es. On 7 February 1962 the Thunderbolts went to sea as part of Carrier Air Group 10 (CVG-10) onboard the USS Sangri-La (CVA-38). Thirteen F-8Bs were used on this Med cruise which ended on 28

Restored F-8A 145336 at The Planes Of Fame Museum in Chino, Ca., in 1988. Note red-orange tail and wing lightning bolts outlined in black. (Ginter)





Two photos of VMF-251F-8Bs launching from the port catapult of the USS Shangri La (CVA-38) on 7-10-62. Note the "AK" tail code of CVW-10. (USN)

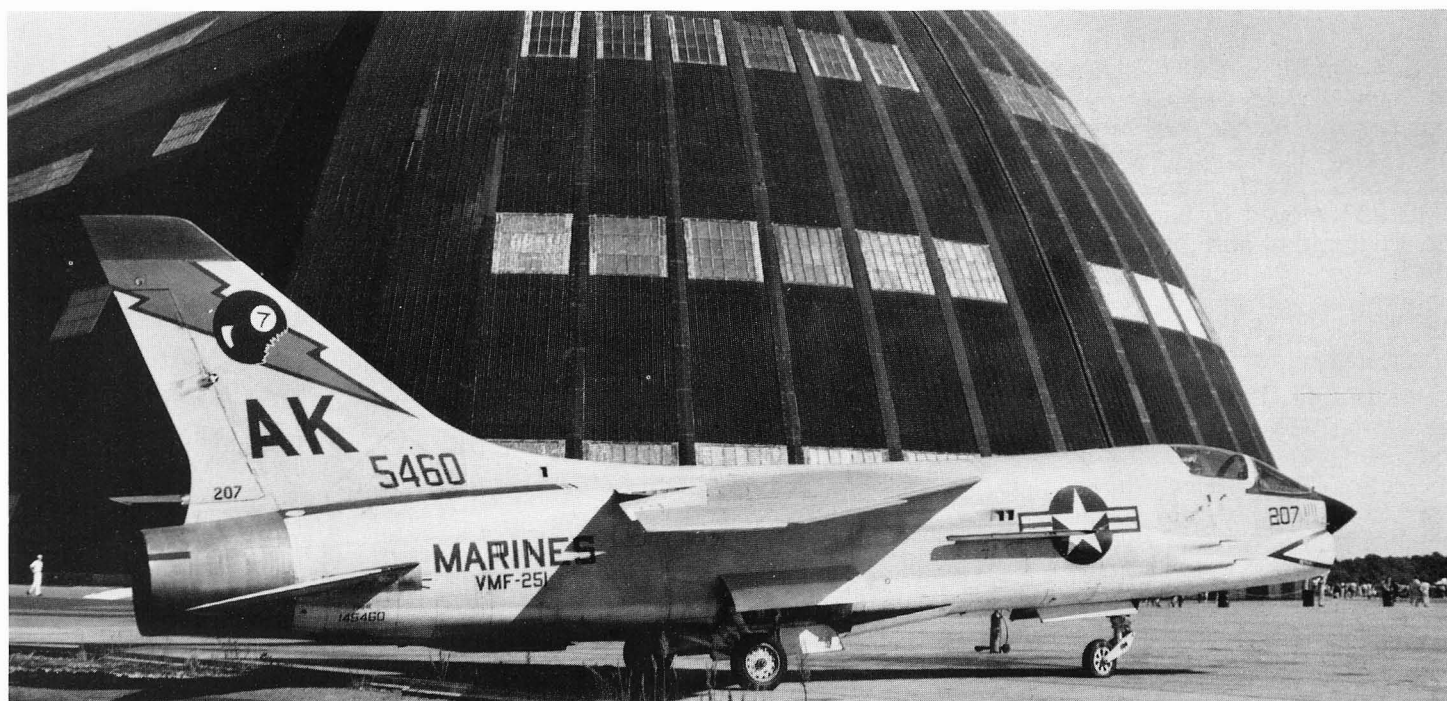
"THUNDERBOLTS"

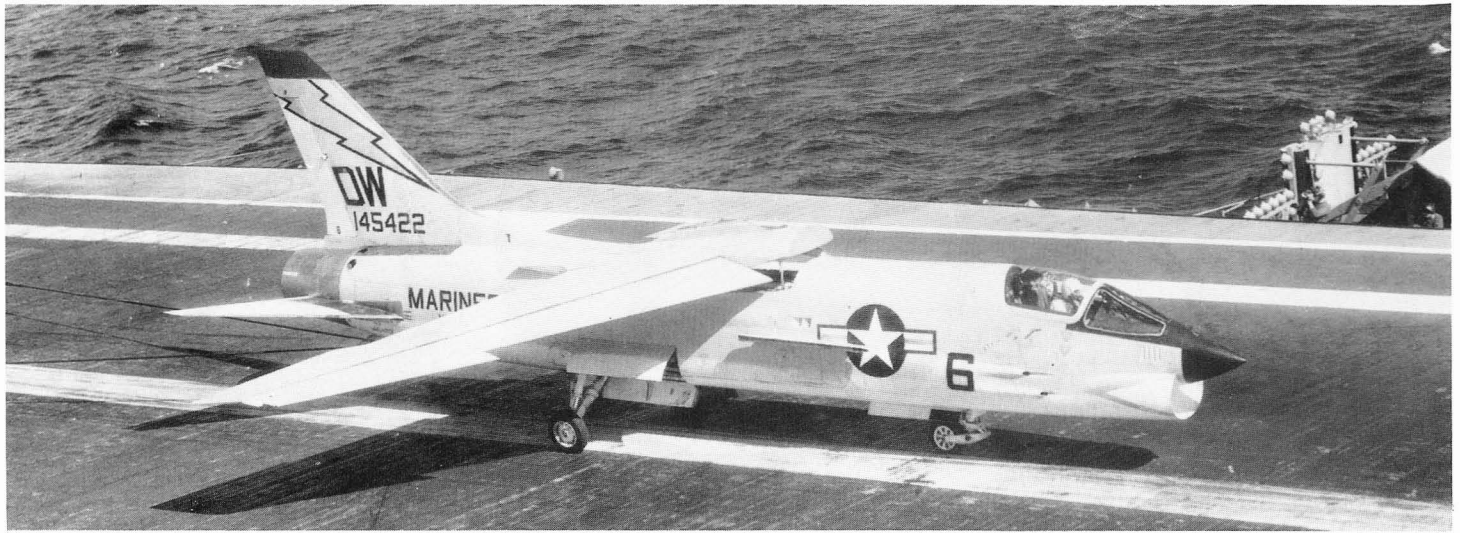
August 1962. In addition to their Med cruise VMF-251 periodically deployed to MCAS Yuma for ordnance training and weapon meets and to various bases in the Caribbean, primarily Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.

On 31 October 1964 VMF-251 was redesignated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251 (VMFA-251). The redesignation was the result of the arrival of the McDonnell F-4B Phantom to the squadron. The F-4B was replaced by the F-4S. June 1986 saw the Phantoms replaced by McDonnell Douglas F-18 Hornets.

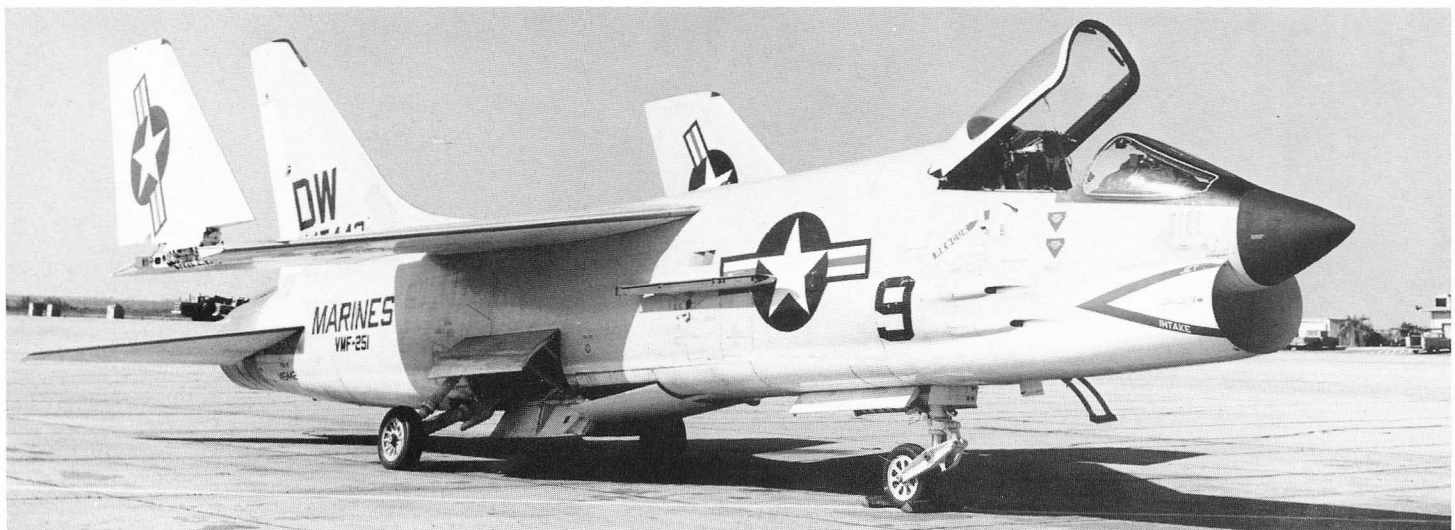


F8U-1E (F-8B) 145460 of VMF-251 with CVW-10 "AK" tail code and black 7 ball on the tail at NAS South Weymouth on 9-15-62. (Tom Cuddy via AAHS)





F-8B 145422 catches a wire on the USS Lexington (CVS-16) on 7-23-63. (USN) F-8B 145454 taking off at MCAS Beaufort, S.C. (USN) F8U-1E (F-8B) 145520 taxiing at NAS Miramar on 1-19-63, (Clay Jansson) F8U-1E (F-8B) 145443 parked on the transient line at Miramar on 1-19-63, note absense of red-orange lightning bolt. (Clay Jansson)



MARINE ALL WEATHER FIGHTER SQUADRON THREE ONE TWO VMF(AW)-312 "CHECKERBOARDS"

Marine All Weather Fighter Squadron 312 was initially activated as Marine Fighting Squadron 312 on 1 June 1943 at Parris Island, South Carolina. The following January, the unit was relocated to San Diego, California, for trans-shipment to Hawaii. After arriving at Ewa in early March, it embarked on a four month training program before movement to the South Pacific.

The Okinawa campaign was the only World War II combat operation in which the squadron participated. It arrived on the island in early April 1945 and made its first contact with enemy planes on the 12th. During the battle for Okinawa, VMF-312 compiled quite an enviable record of destroying 59-1/2 enemy planes. The squadron, while engaged on Okinawa, supported the 8th Marines landing on Iheya Shima on 3 June. A week later, it began flying sorties over the Japanese home island; thus, becoming one of the first land-based fighter squadrons to strike Japan itself.

The squadron remained on Okinawa following the termination of hostilities and participated in the island's occupation. In early 1946, however, VMF-312 was ordered to redeploy to the United States, arriving in San Diego in February and March. It then moved to El Toro, California, and was stationed there for the next four years. A minor change in designation



occurred on 1 December 1949 when the squadron became Marine Fighter Squadron 312.

The outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 was the next occasion for the deployment of the squadron to the Far East. Movement of VMF-312 to Japan commenced in mid-August. The first combat missions flown by squadron pilots took place on 23 September. The move of all personnel and aircraft to Korea was completed five days later. The squadron continued to be utilized in a combat role for nearly three years. It conducted air operations not only from bases in Korea and Japan but also from U.S. Navy carriers. Air support missions were those most frequently flown, however other combat assignments were undertaken. In April 1951, VMF-312 had its first encounter with enemy airplanes. Two fighters on the 21st downed three Communist planes while damaging another in an aerial duel.

On 1 March 1952, the squadron was redesignated to Marine Attack



Squadron 312. A spectacular first occurred in September of that year. Two propeller driven F4U "Corsairs" from the squadron were attacked by eight enemy MIG-15 jets. In the ensuing engagement, Captain Jesse G. Folmar was able to down one of the MIGs. His plane was later hit and downed in the air-to-air combat. Folmar, although wounded, survived the crash. His destruction of the MIG was the first instance of a slower propeller fighter downing a jet.

The combat tour for the squadron ended on 10 June 1953 when it was relieved by VMA-332. Marine Attack Squadron 312 was subsequently relocated to Miami, Florida, on the 21st. The move to Miami brought with it a new aircraft, the Grumman F9F-4 Panther. Six months later, another relocation occurred with the squadron moving to Cherry Point, North Carolina, in January 1954. It

F8U-1 (F-8A) 145430 in VMF-312's distinct black and white checkerboard scheme, note black anti-glare panel and nose extend into the intake. (USMC via Larkins)



underwent a redesignation shortly thereafter. On 15 February, it again became Marine Fighter Squadron 312. In November 1954 the Checkerboards took delivery of its first swept-winged aircraft, the North American FJ-2 Fury. For the next few years, VMF-312 was involved in a variety of training exercises which saw its deployment to such locations as Puerto Rico, Guantanamo Bay, Panama, the Mediterranean, and Greece. The FJ-2 was replaced by the FJ-3 Fury in October 1956. In November 1957 the Checkerboards transferred to MCAAS Beaufort and received Sidewinder capable FJ-3M Furys in late 1958. VMF-312 participated in normal training exercises until June 1959 when the supersonic F8U-1 (F-8A) Crusaders arrived.

With the new aircraft, the squadron began intensive training in preparation for a deployment to the Far East. Excellent training was accomplished during two deployments to Guantanamo Bay from 13 November to 13 December 1959 and again from 21 February to 11 March 1960. On 25 June, VMF-312 deployed to NAS, Mayport, Florida, where the pilots flew on board the USS Saratoga for a week of carrier qualifications. The period between 1 August and 15 November 1960 was spent in tactics training, missile firing, and other general deployment preparations. On 15 November the squadron was officially detached from MAG-32 and headed for NAS Atsugi, Japan. On 1 January 1961, VMF-312 joined MAG-11, 1st MAW relieving VMF-251 and taking custody of its F8U-1Es (F-8Bs).

Normal training continued in the Far East until March 1961 when the



Checkerboards boarded the USS Coral Sea (CVA-43) for carrier qualifications. Upon return two fully armed Crusaders were placed on five-minute ready alert to augment the 41st Air Division's air defense of Japan. On the 23rd the squadron left for the Philippines where on the 28th they boarded the USS Midway (CVA-41) for three weeks off the coast of Vietnam. On 29 April they deployed on board the USS Coral Sea (CVA-43) until 10 May 1961.

The squadron returned to Atsugi on 31 May for a standown to rework its F8U-1Es. After completing the rework VMF-312 returned to Cubi Point on 30 September where it conducted carrier qualifications onboard the USS Ticonderoga (CVA-14). On 1 November 1961 the unit returned to Atsugi until relieved by VMF-451 in January 1962.

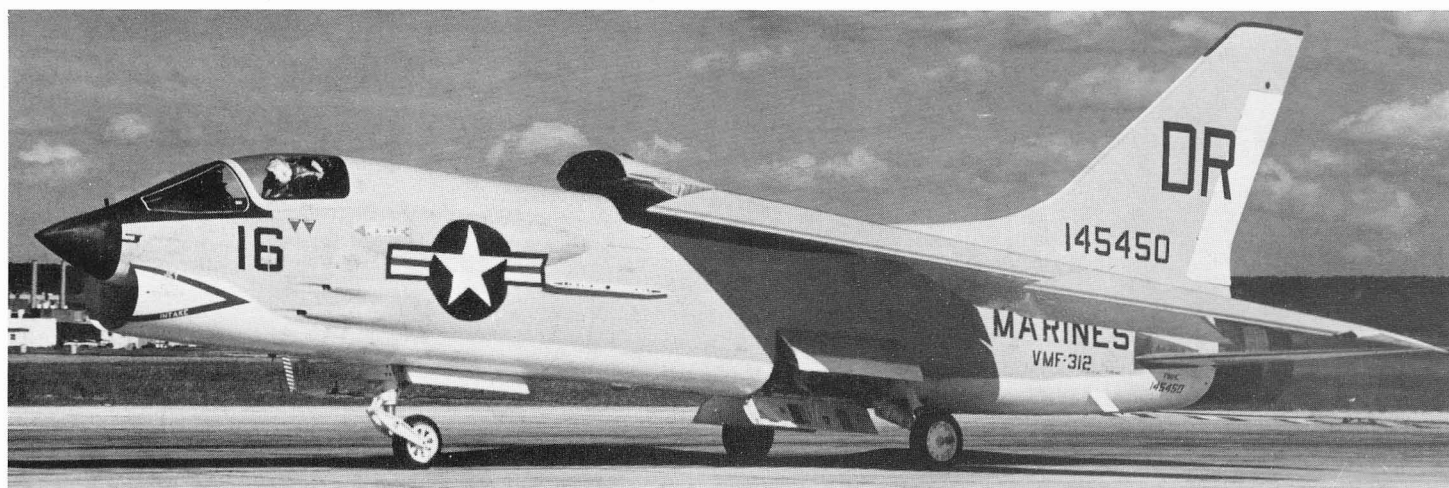
The squadron transferred to MCAS El Toro and after eighteen months was redesignated Marine All Weather Fighter Squadron 312 on 1 August 1963. El Toro continued to be the squadron's home until 1965 when the United States began a major build-up of forces in the Republic of Vietnam. The squadron returned to Japan on 1 February of that year and began preparations for a possible move to

VMF-312 F8U-1 (F-8A) 143694 at NAS Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1959. This aircraft is unusual in that checkerboard pattern is tilted on end. The tail pattern is bordered by a yellow stripe on top and red on bottom. (Candid Aero-Files)

the embattled nation. Such a move eventually did take place on 19 December 1965. Marine All Weather Fighter Squadron 312, upon its arrival in Da Nang, immediately began operations against the enemy. Its participation in the war, however, was shortlived as the unit ceased all combat activity in Vietnam on 31 January 1966, after 718 combat missions. It was re-established in the United States on the following day.

Since its return from Asia, the squadron has been based at Beaufort. On the day of its return, 1 February 1966, the squadron was once again redesignated. It acquired at the time its present designation of Marine Fighter/Attack Squadron 312 (VMFA-312). The Checkerboards flew the McDonnell F-4B Phantom until it was replaced on 5 January 1973 with the F-4J. In March 1988 the F-4Js were replaced by McDonnell Douglas F-18A Hornets.

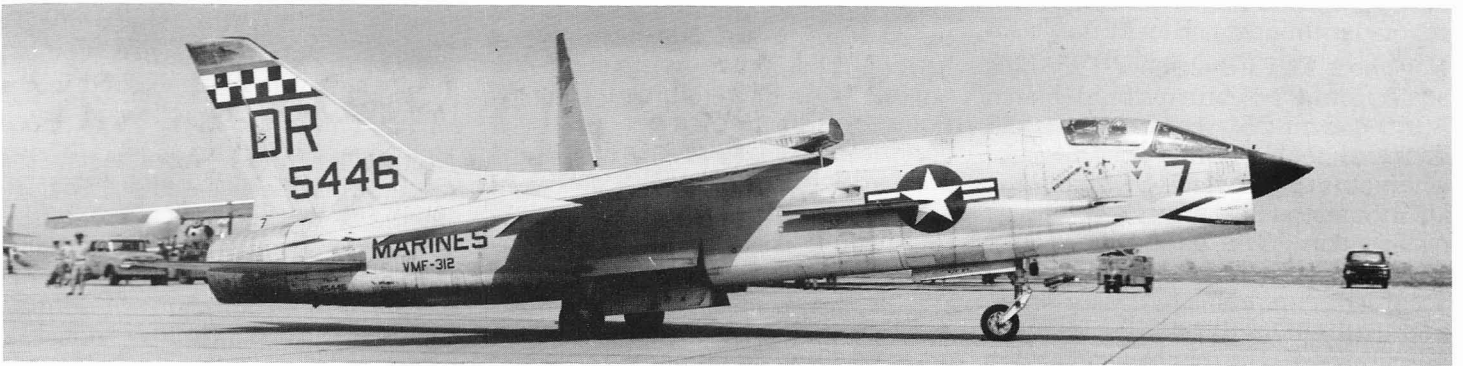
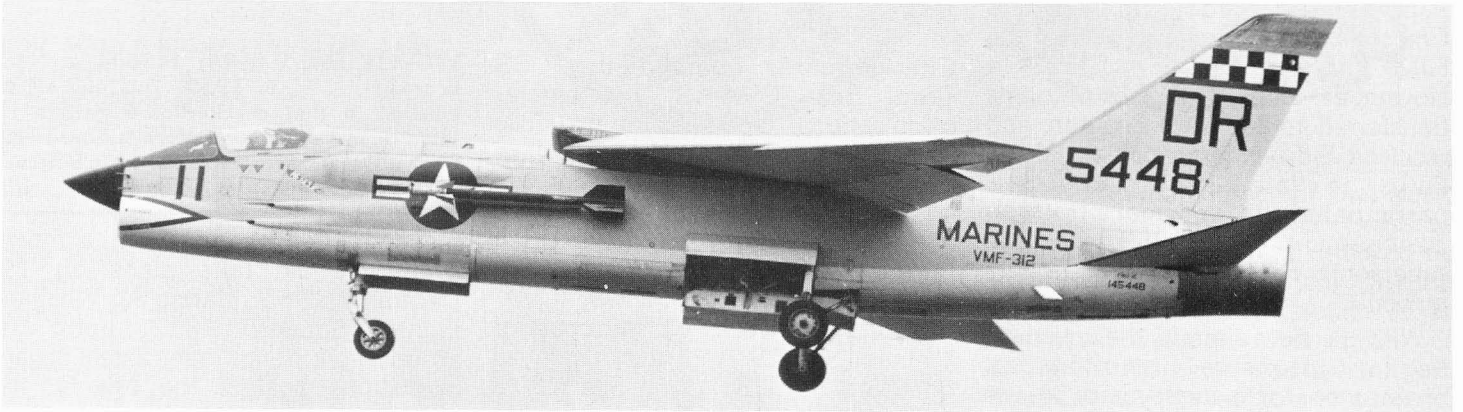
Factory delivery of VMF-312 F8U-1E (F-8B) at NAS Dallas. (Vought)





F8U-1 (F-8A) 143718 at Andrews AFB in May 1960. (Bill Crimmins)

F8U-1E (F-8B) 145448 over NAS Atsugi on 11-6-61 with toned down checkerboard scheme and practice sidewinder. (T. Matsuzaki)



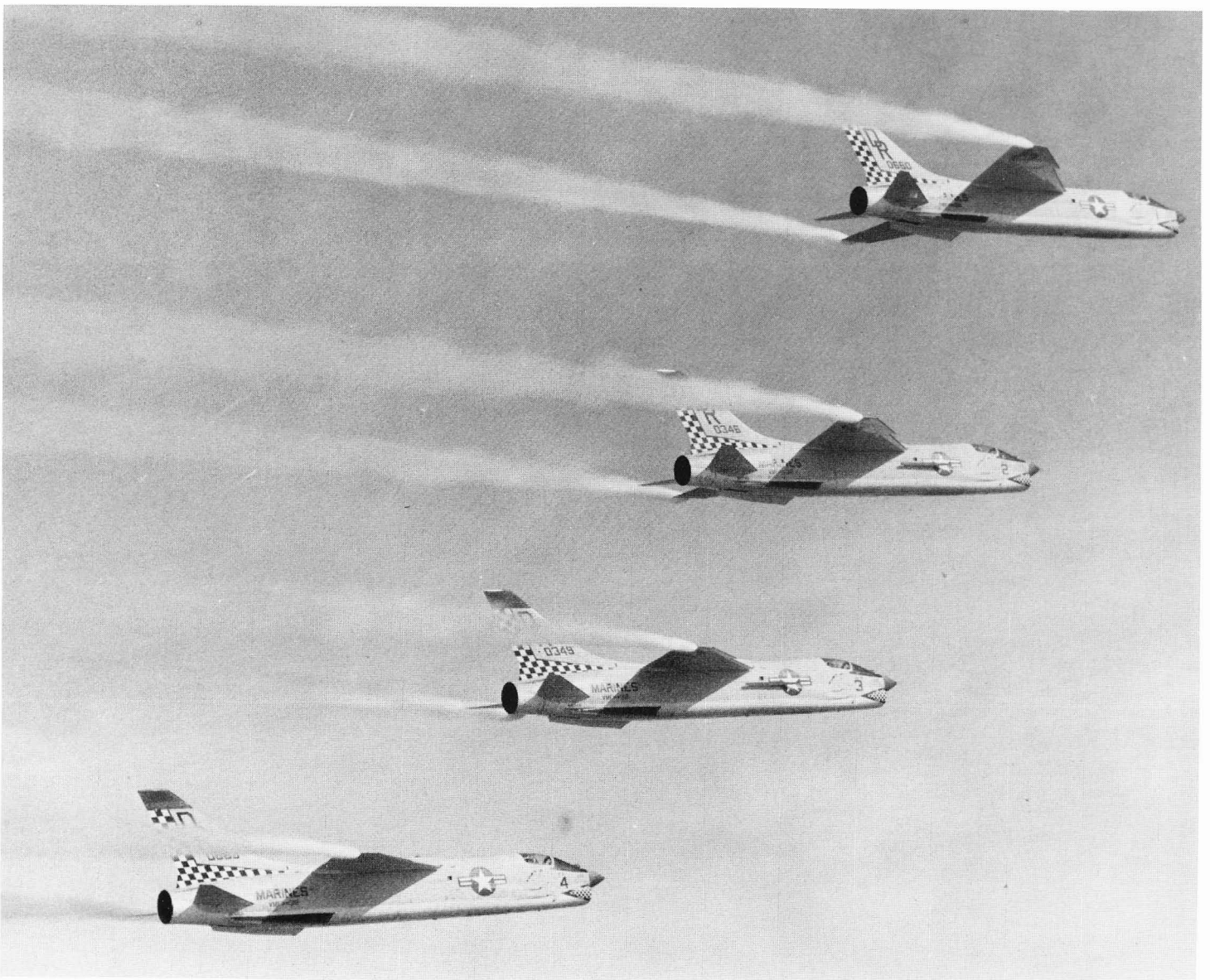
F8U-1Es 145446 and 145479 taxi in at Norton AFB on 5-19-62. Note the location of wing codes. (Swisher)

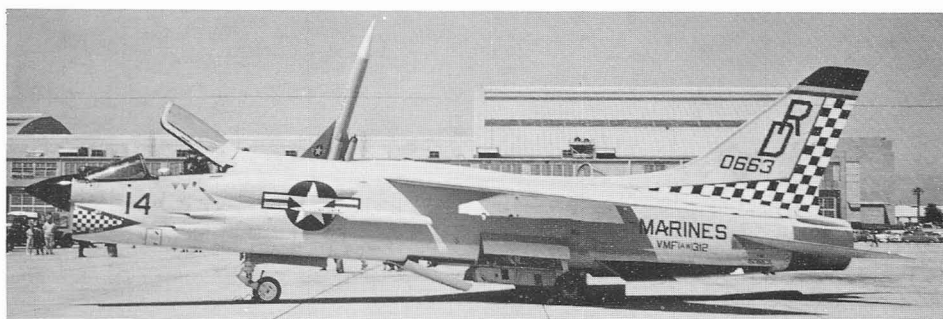




F8U-1E (F-8B) 145543 with checkerboard on tail only, at MCAS El Toro on 9-15-62. (Swisher)

Four VMF(AW)-312 F-8Ds lead by squadron CO Lt. Col. H. C. Lehnert vents fuel off Newport Beach, Ca., note new checkerboard color scheme. (USMC)





"CHECKERBOARDS"

F-8 150665 with new paint scheme on 2-15-64 at MCAS El Toro while loaded with bulpups and sidewinders. Tail colors are black fin tip, yellow stripe, red stripe, black and white checkerboard with red leading edge and ventral fins are black, red, yellow. (Swisher) F-8E 150663 in May 1964. (Jansson) F-8E 150656 and 150888 in flight over the San Bernardino Mountains. (USMC)





MARINE FIGHTER SQUADRON THREE TWO ONE VMF-321 "HELL'S ANGELS"/ "BLACK BARONS"

redesignated Marine Attack Squadron 321 (VMA-321) in response to receiving the Douglas AD-5 Skyraiders. On 19 October 1961 the Hell's Angels moved to Andrews AFB and in May 1962 received the North American FJ-4B (AF-IE) Fury. On 1 July 1962 VMA-321 became VMF-321 once again.

In January 1965 the Hell's Angels began transition training in the Chance Vought F-8B Crusader. On 22 April 1965 four VMF-321 pilots made a non-stop cross-country flight to NAS Miramar, California, in six hours during which they were refueled by Wisconsin Air National Guard KC-97 tankers. This tanking operation was followed by Operation Ready One on 17 November 1965 when four Crusaders were refuelled by VMGR-252 KC-130s on their non-stop, over-water flight from Andrews AFB to MAS Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.

The Hell's Angels won the Pete Ross Trophy on 17 August 1969, in recognition of an outstanding safety record. Because of the reorganization of the reserves in 1971, VMF-321 received nineteen F-8s from the Naval Air Reserve at Andrews and changed its tail code to "MG". In 1972 the squadron received the Marine Air Reserve Trophy for the best fighter squadron in the Marine Air Reserve.

In response to a new paint scheme, consisting of a black dorsal spine and vertical stabilizer covered with white stars, VMF-321 became known as the "Black Barons" until 1975 when they reverted back to the "Hell's Angels". The F-8Ks were replaced by McDonnell F-4B Phantoms in December 1973 and the squadron was redesignated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron - 321 (VMFA-321).

In 1976 the "B" model Phantom was replaced by the updated F-4N which was replaced in 1984 by the F-4S. The Hell's Angels continue to fly the "S" model today.

VMF-321 was established on 1 February 1943 at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina, as a unit of MAG-31. Four months later the Hells Angels and their Chance Vought F4U-1 Corsairs were to fly combat from Vella La Vella in the Solomon Islands. VMF-321 scored 39 kills while in the Solomons and before being transferred to Green Island on 30 March 1944. In August 1944 VMF-321 embarked on the USS Kwajalein (CVE-98) for strikes against Rota and Pagan. The squadron returned to MCAS Mojave, California on 1 February 1945 to train in the new FG-1D Corsair. In March F6F-3 Hellcats replaced the Corsairs which in turn were replaced by F6F-5 Hellcats in July. The F6F-5s deployed onboard the USS Puget Sound (CVE-113) to provide air cover for the occupational invasions. VMF-321 was disbanded on 28 January 1946.

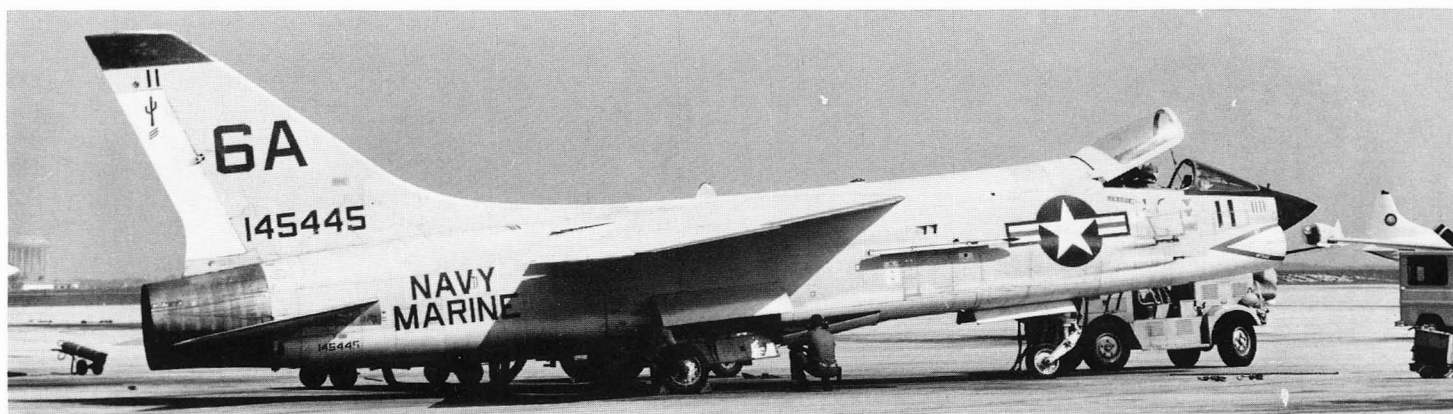
VMF-321 was reactivated on 1 July 1946 at NAS Anacostia, Washington, D.C., as part of the Marine Air Reserve program. The reserve squadron was assigned fourteen F4U-4 Corsairs. The squadron was called to active duty on 1 March 1951 in response to the Korean War. VMF-321 was flying F8F-1 Bearcats as the time and did not deploy as a unit. Instead its pilots were used as replacements for front line squadrons. In 1953 the Bearcats were replaced by the F4U-4.

On 15 May 1958 VMF-321 was

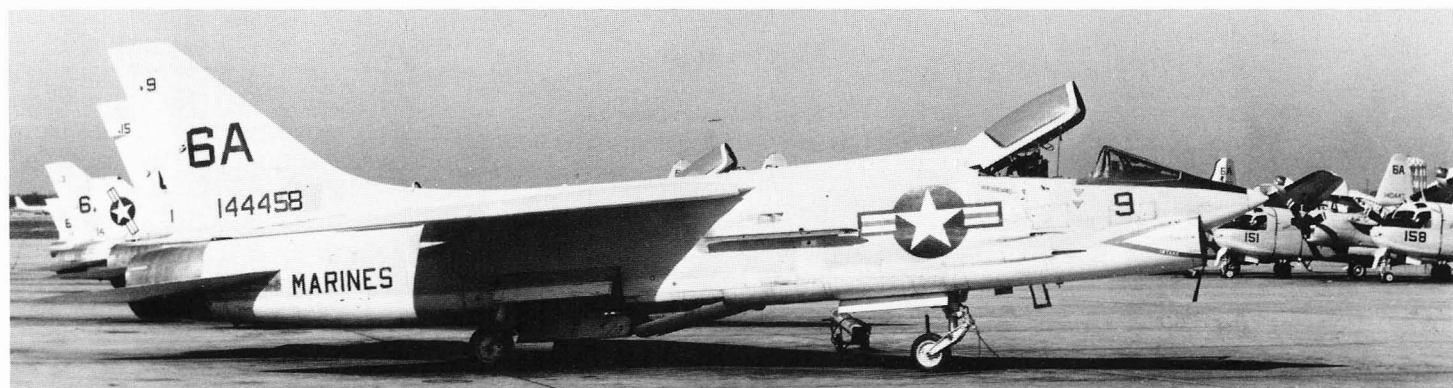


F-8B 145425 of VMF-321 at MCAS Yuma on 3-11-67, as used by VMF-321 when aircraft was shared with Navy reserve squadrons. (Clay Jansson)





VMF-321 F-8B 145445 at Andrews AFB on 6-2-67 with cactus and chevrons on the rudder. (Clay Jansson) VMF-321 F-8A 144458 on 10-9-69. Note that "Navy" has been deleted from the fuselage. (R.F. Besecker)



VMF-321 F-8L 145492 with faded and chipped red tail at Andrews in August 1970. (D. Kasulka via Jansson)

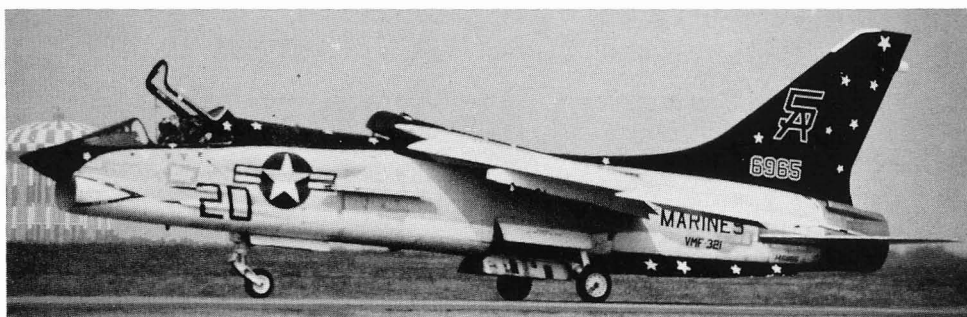


F-8L 145498 with new "5A" tail code and white pitchfork on a red rudder and a "Hells Angel" on the fin tip. (R.F. Besecker)





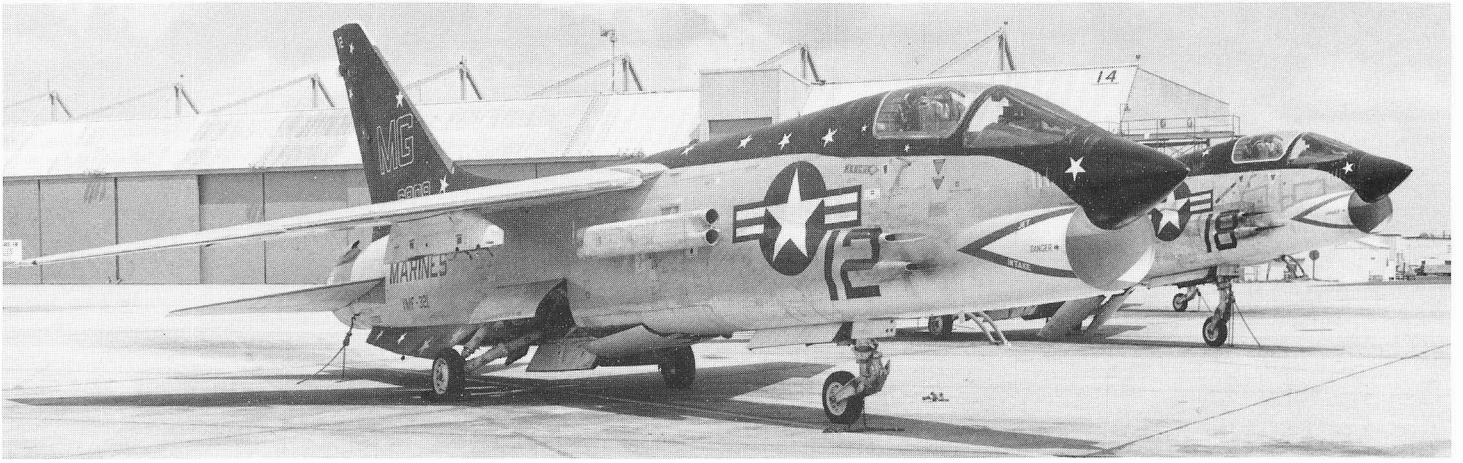
F-8K 146908 of VMF-321 with wing pylon attached in 1971. (Fred Roos/Naval Fighters) F-8K 145562 with colorful Black Baron paint scheme on 10-2-71. (Don Spering) F-8K 146965 taxis in at Andrews AFB on 8-15-71. (Stephen Miller via Menard) F-8K 147025 at McConnell AFB in 1972. (Barry Miller)



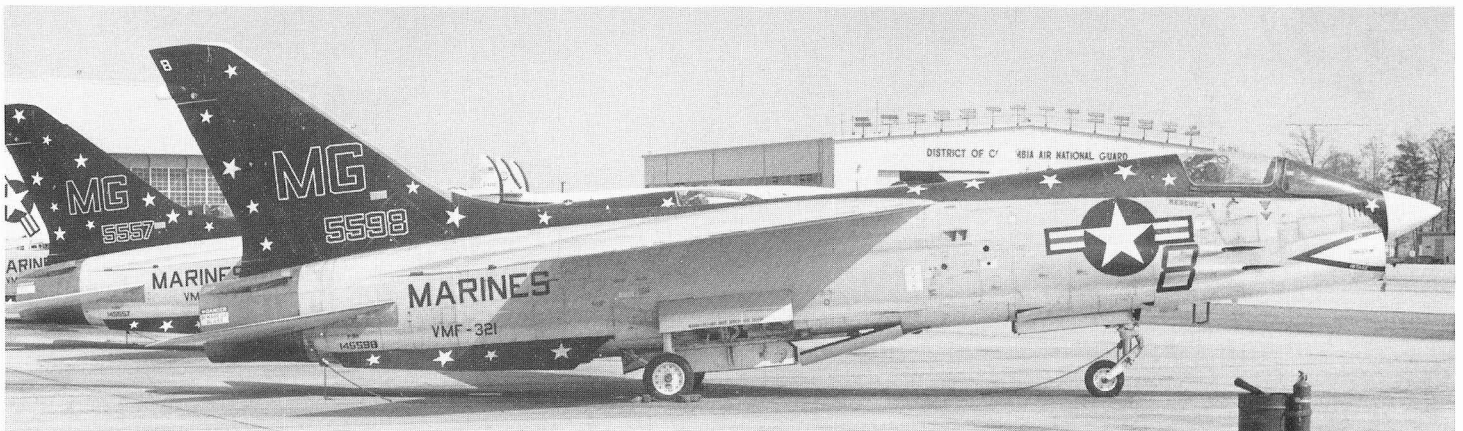
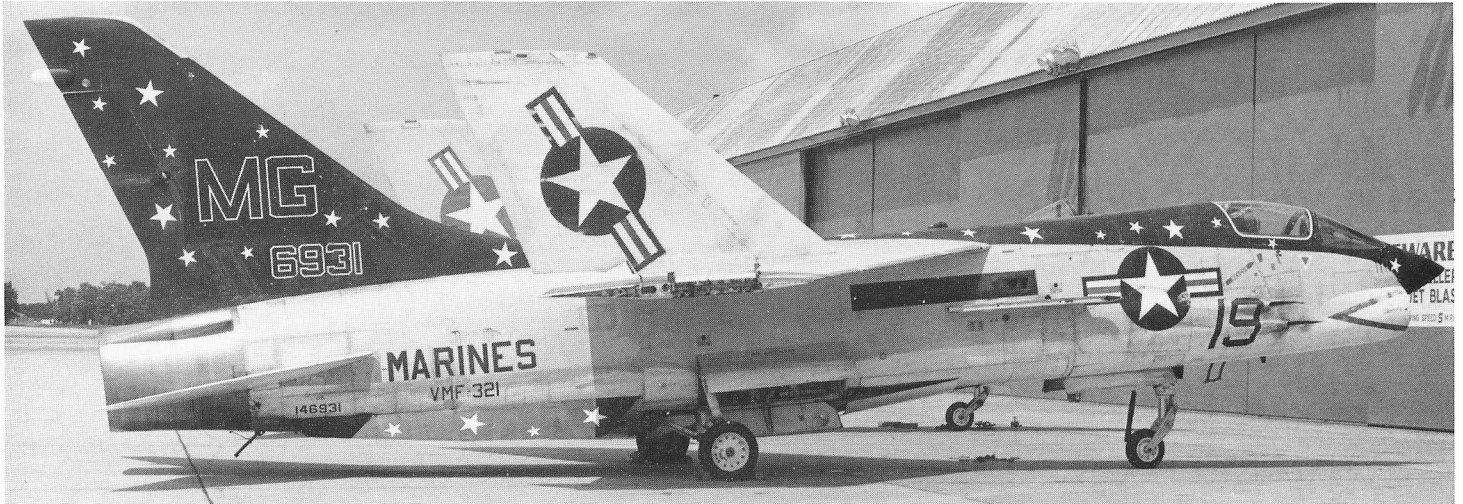
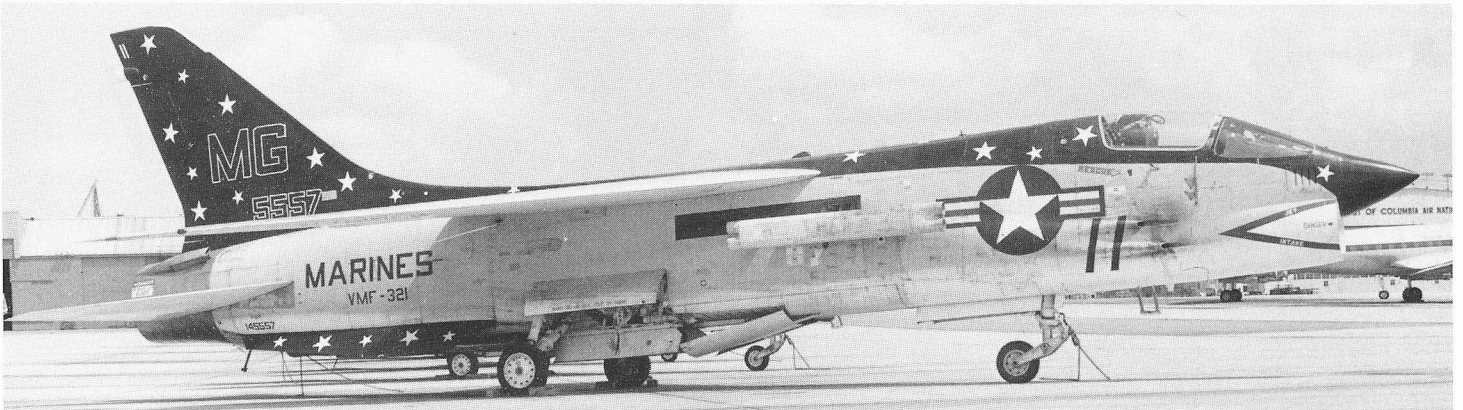
VMF-321

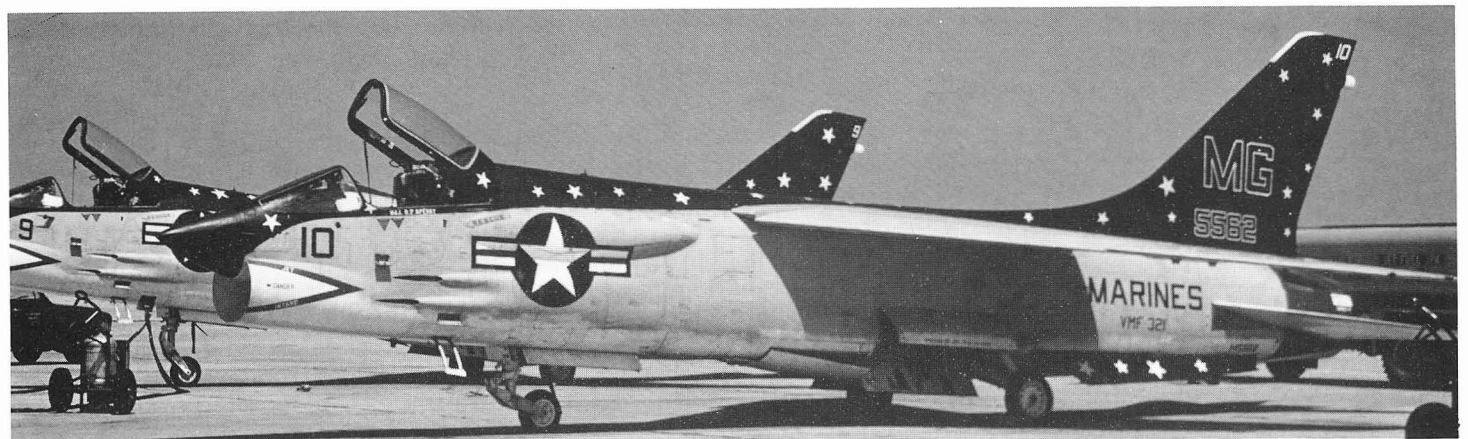
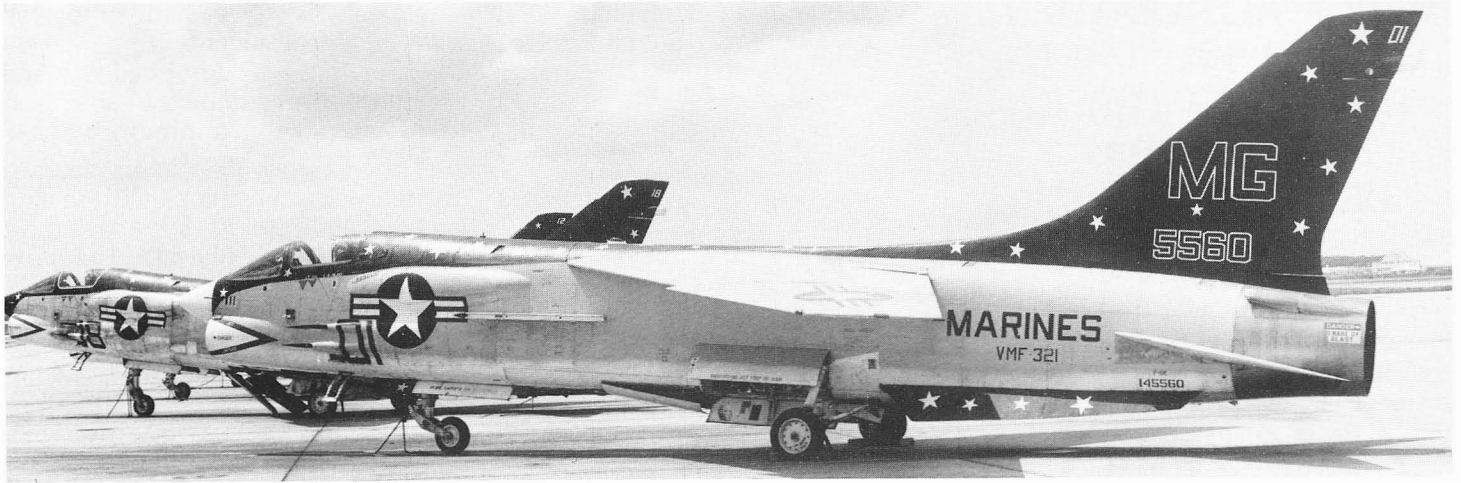
"BLACK BARONS"





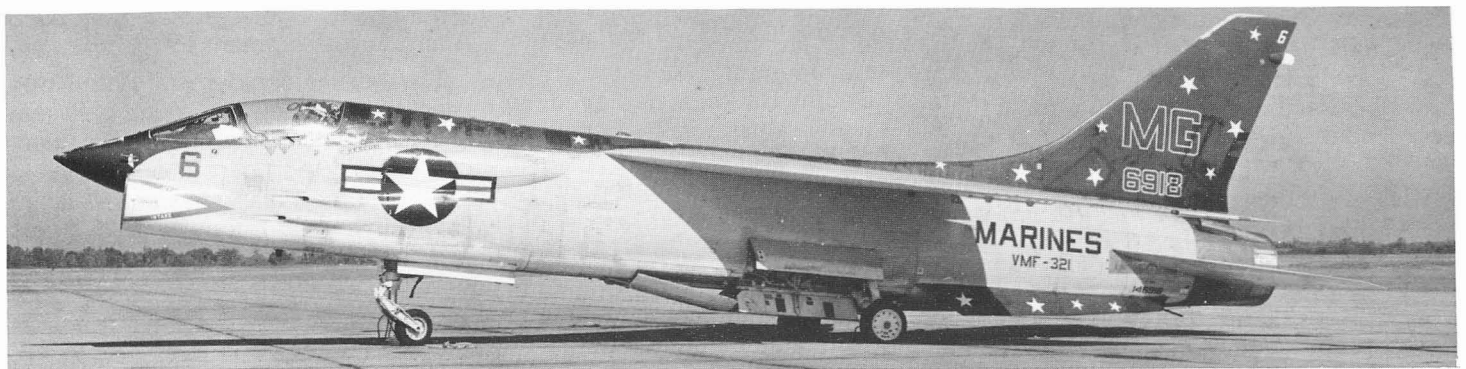
Assorted VMF-321 F-8Ks in the Black Baron scheme with new "MG" tail code on 8-6-72. Note pylons and Zunis. (Don Spering)





TOP - F-8K 145560 on 8-6-72. (Don Spering) In 1973 smaller nose numbers were used as seen on 145562 above (Barry Miller),

146918 below (Fred Ross/Naval Fighters), and 145598 bottom. (Clay Jansson)



**MARINE ALL-WEATHER
FIGHTER SQUADRON
THREE TWO THREE
VMF(AW)-323
"DEATH RATTLERS"**



Marine Fighter Squadron 323 (VMF-323) was commissioned on 1 August 1943 at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina, with the F4U-1 Corsair. The Death Rattlers were transferred to NAAS El Centro, CA, on 12 January 1944 and in March moved to Camp Pendleton. On 21 July 1944 VMF-323 left CONUS for MCAS Ewa, Hawaii, and then left in turn for Pacific combat tour on 6 September 1944. The squadron ended the war with 124-1/2 kills.

VMF-323 was transferred to MCAS El Toro in March 1946. The squadron continued flying Corsairs and participated in a number of exercises including the movie "The Sands of Iwo Jima" in 1949. On 7 July 1950 VMF-323 was ordered to Korea. The Death Rattlers operated from the USS Badoeng Strait (CVE-116) from 5 August 1950 until Jan. 1951. They then operated from Bofu Air Base and K-1 until reporting aboard to USS Sicily (CVE-118) in June 1951. They returned to K-1 in September and moved to K-18 in October. Another move occurred in April 1952 to K-6 and on 2 July 1953 VMF-323 was redesignated Marine Attack Squadron 323 (VMA-323). The squadron left the war zone in July 1953 with brief layovers at Itami Air Base and NAS Atsugi before

being transported stateside. The squadron recorded 48,677.2 flight hours during its stay in the Korean theater of operations.

When VMA-323 left Japan, it left its aircraft behind and upon arrival at MCAS El Toro on 14 July 1953 started transitioning to F9F-2 Panthers. The F9F-2s formerly belonged to VMA-251 which relieved VMA-323 in Japan. The squadron flew various marks of Grumman Panthers and Cougars culminating in the F9F-8 Cougar in 1956.

In September 1956 VMA-323 transitioned to the FJ-4 Fury and on 31 December 1956 the squadron was redesignated VMF-323. On 30 June 1957 VMF-323 was on its way to NAS Atsugi, Japan, to relieve VMF-451. In September 1958 VMF-323 was relieved by VMF-451 and returned to MCAS El Toro where in 1959 they transitioned to the F8U-1 Crusader.

After transitioning to the Crusader the squadron conducted carrier qualifications onboard the USS Oriskany (CVA-34) on 21 February 1960. In November 1961 VMF-323 became the first Marine Crusader squadron to deploy as a part of a Carrier Air Group when they boarded the USS Lexington (CVA-16) as part of CAG-14. VMF-323 pilots flew combat air patrol and escort missions as part of Task Force 77 until returning to MCAS El Toro in May 1962.

The Death Rattlers deployed to NAS Dallas in July 1962 where they traded in their F8U-2s (F-8Cs) which were used on the Lexington cruise for the all-weather F8U-2NE (F8E) Crusader. Because of the increased capabilities of the F-8E VMF-323 was redesignated Marine All-Weather Fighter Squadron 323 (VMF(AW)-323).

In January 1963 the squadron took part in a MAG-33 weapons meet where they flew 1,508 sorties for a total of 2,343 hours in the air. The following month VFM(AW)-323 provided air support for Operation Steel Gate during amphibious landings at Camp Pendleton and Desert Winds wargames at Twenty-Nine Palms.

On 18 June 1963 the Death Rattlers started their trans-Pacific flight of 18 F-8Es from MCAS El Toro to NAS Atsugi during Operation Green Wave. The trans-Pac was to be conducted with three

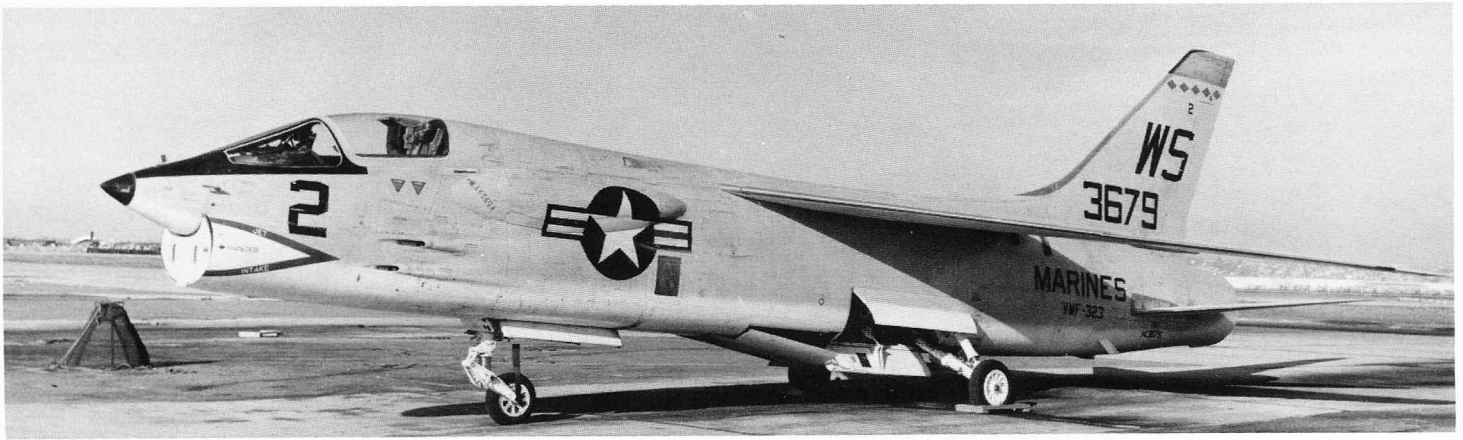
flights of six Crusaders supported with mid-air refueling from Marine KC-130s, but a string of bad luck and accidents prevented the squadron from completing this mission.

Of the first six F-8s launched, two aborted and four completed the first leg of the mission by arriving at MCAS Kaneohe, Hawaii. The next day Major D.K. Tooker, the flight leader, ejected from his F-8 seconds before it exploded after rupturing the main fuel cell during in-flight refueling. Tooker was rescued in stormy seas with 12-foot swells by the USS Koimer (DE-331) while the remaining five Crusaders landed at Kaneohe and the third six-plane flight aborted to El Toro. On the third day the third six-plane flight was again launched for Kaneohe. Disaster struck again as First Lieutenant C.J. Judkins III tried to eject when his fuel cell ruptured during refueling. His ejection system failed and he was forced to bail out. His parachute then failed to open and he fell 10,000 feet into the sea. Miraculously Lieutenant Judkins survived with two broken ankles, a fractured pelvis and severe facial injuries. This accident put an end to Operation Green Wave.

Squadron personnel (and equipment) were airlifted to Atsugi and the aircraft were sent by ship. The nine F-8s at Kaneohe were transported aboard the USS Core (CVE-13) and seven F-8s were flown to NAS Alameda for shipment to Atsugi.

The Atsugi deployment lasted one year during which the squadron again deployed twice onboard Pacific Fleet carriers and took part in operations in Okinawa, the Philippines and Taiwan. On 1 July 1964 the Death Rattlers were redesignated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323 (VMFA-323).

As VMFA-323 the squadron was transferred to MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina, where in August 1964 they began operating F-4B Phantoms. In 1965 the Death Rattlers sent their F-4Bs to Vietnam where they continued to operate until December 1969. January 1970 found the squadron back at El Toro flying F-4Bs. F-4Ns replaced the F-4Bs in 1973 and were flown until September 1982 when F/A-18 flight training started. After the pilots were trained at NAS Lemoore, Calif., the first F-18A Hornet was delivered to the Death Rattlers on 21 March 1983. VMFA-323 continues to fly the Hornet in 1989.



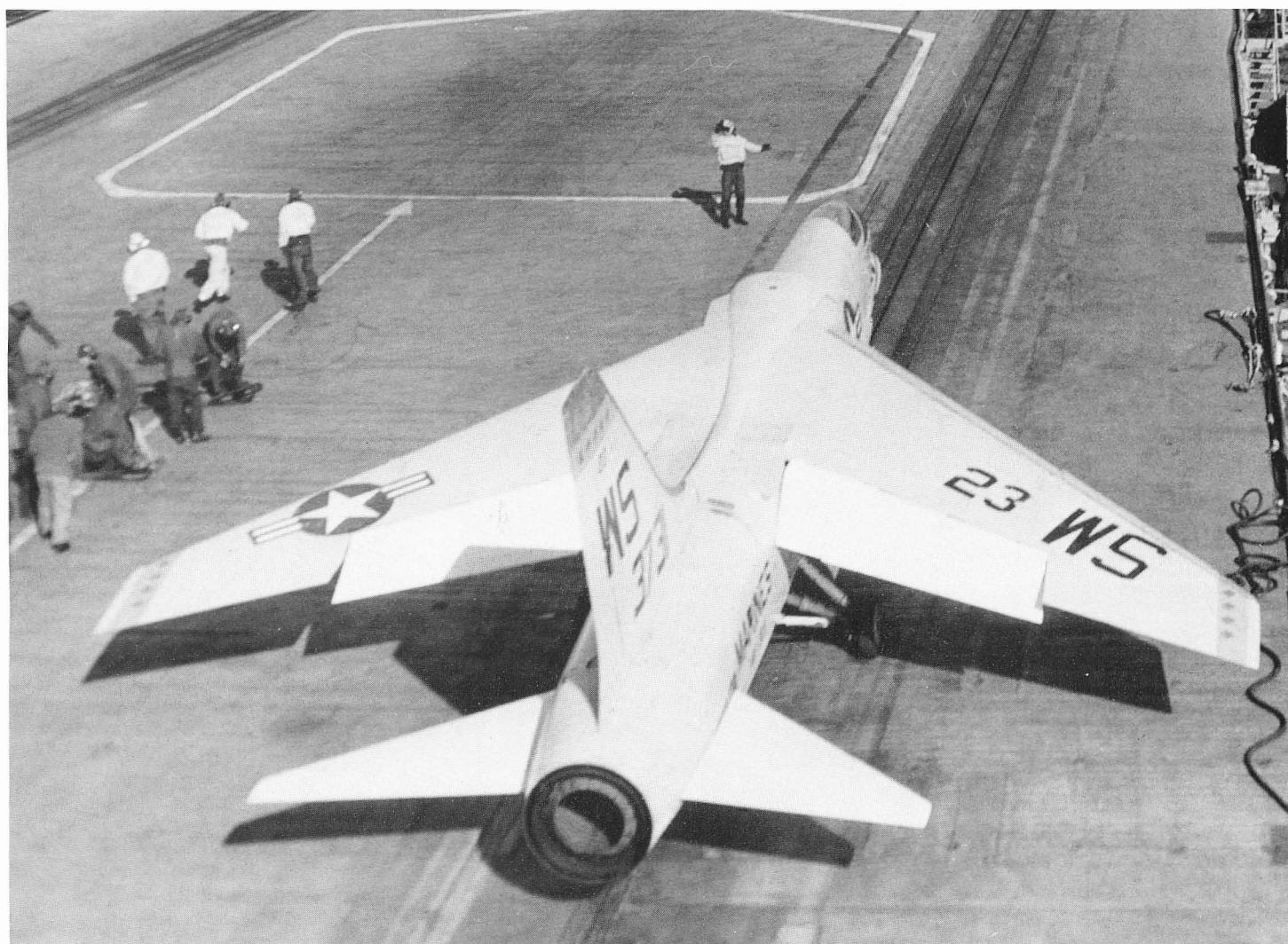
VMF-323 F8U-1 (F-8A) 143679 on 1-30-60 with yellow tail stripe and brown diamonds. (Clay Jansson)

F8U-1 (F-8A) 145400 being loaded aboard the USS Oriskany in 1960 for carrier qualifications. (B. Woods via Jansson)



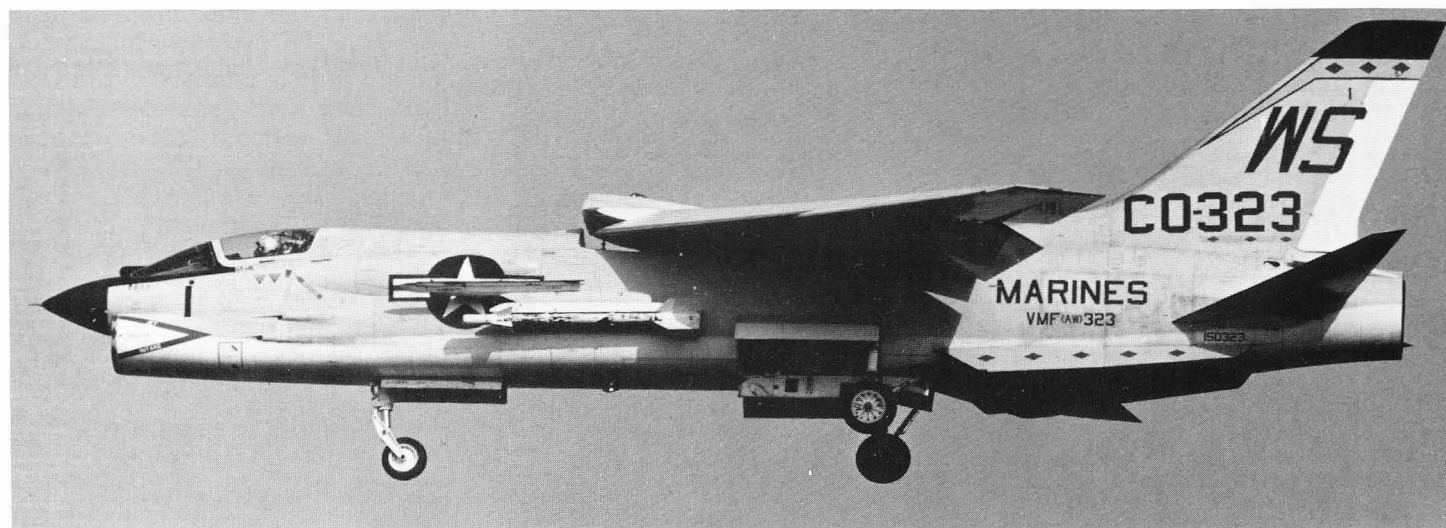
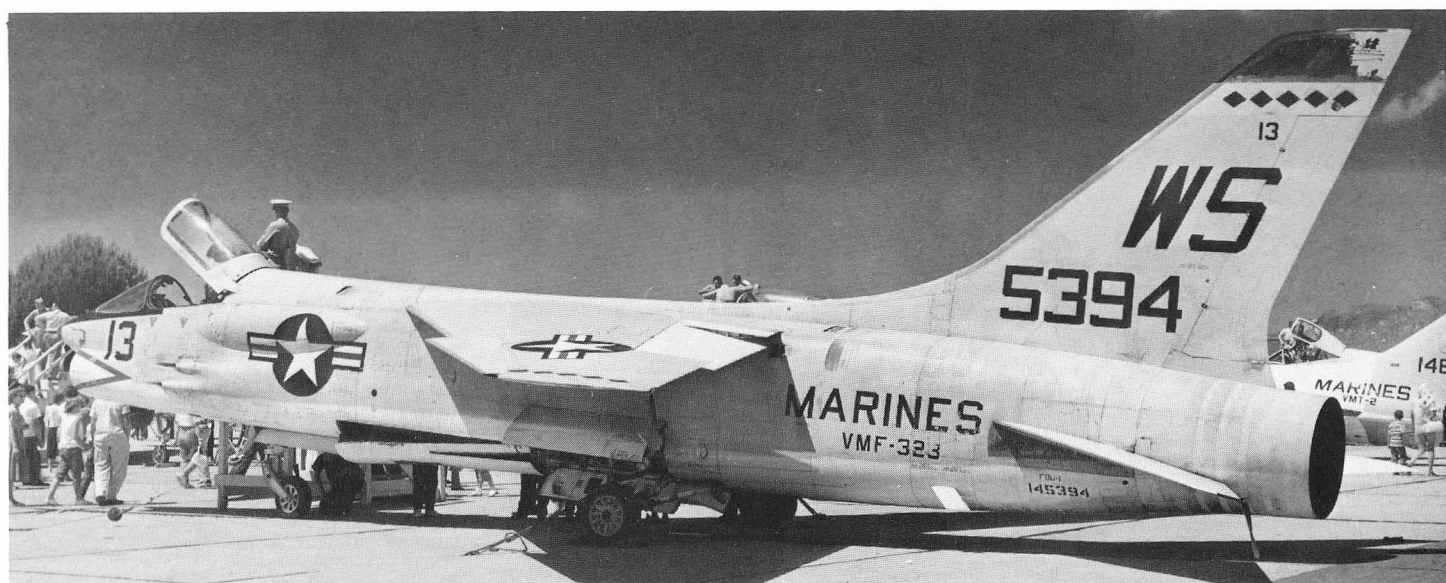


VMF-323 Air Ops on board the Oriskany (CVA-34) on 3-9-60; 143698 catches a wire and 143731 prepares for a cat shot off the starboard cat . note wing codes and wing tip stripes. (B. Woods via Jansson)





F8U-1 143698 conducts touch-and-gos with 143760 parked by the island on 3-9-60. (B. Woods via Jansson) F8U-1 145394 at MCAS El Toro on 5-21-60. (Swisher) F-8E 150323 with BuNo printed as "CO-323" on 10-8-63. (T. Matsuzaki)





F8U-2 (F-8C) 145595 of VMF-323 in June 1962 with yellow and dark brown diamond back markings on the tail, wing tips and ventral fin. (Clay Jansson)



VMF(AW)-323 F-8E 149194 over MCAS El Toro in October 1962, note wing codes. (USMC)

F-8E 150920 rests today with other Marine fighters as a gate guard at MCAS El Toro. (Ginter)



**MARINE ALL-WEATHER
FIGHTER SQUADRON
THREE THREE THREE
VMF(AW)-333
"FIGHTING
SHAMROCKS"**

VMF(AW)-333 was originally commissioned as Marine Scout Bombing Squadron 333 (VMSB-333) at MCAS Cherry Point on 1 August 1943. Equipped with Douglas SBD-4 Dauntlesses the squadron conducted combat training from MCAAF Bogue Field, North Carolina, until departing for the Pacific in June 1944. The "Shamrocks" arrived at Midway after stopovers at San Diego and MCAS Ewa.

VMSB-333 was redesignated Marine Fighter Bomber Squadron 333 (VMBF-333) on 14 October 1944 and subsequently re-equipped with Vought F4U-1D Corsairs. The Corsairs were picked up at MCAS Ewa and in December the squadron was redesignated back to VMSB-333. When the war ended the squadron was deactivated on 1 November 1945 at Ewa.

"Trip Trey" was reactivated as Marine Attack Squadron 333 (VMA-333) on 1 August 1952 at MCAS Miami flying F6F-5 Hellcats. The Hellcats were replaced with F4U-4 Corsairs a few months later and in turn were replaced by Douglas AD-5 Skyraiders in February 1954.

The "Shamrocks" entered the jet age in January 1957 with the North American FJ-3 Fury and became VMF-333. In 1958 the squadron moved to MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina, and obtained FJ-3M Furies to operate with their FJ-3s.

On 6 November 1959 the "Trip Treys" became the first Marine Squadron to receive the Vought F8U-2 (F-8C) Crusader. In 1961 carrier qualifications were held aboard the USS Forrestal (CVA-59) and in October a squadron pilot was forced to eject at one-and-a-half times the speed of sound. Following this incident the squadron was called upon to participate in the Cuban Missile Crisis, in October through December

VMF-333 F-8Cs 146942 and 146943 launching from the USS Forrestal (CVA-59) in ????? 1961. Wing, ventral fins and tail markings are green. (USMC)



1962.

In 1965 Trip Trey became the first tactical Marine Squadron to fly non-stop across the Atlantic when they took part in Operation Bardrink, a joint U.S.-Norwegian exercise. After returning to CONUS the squadron transitioned to the F-8E and on 1 February 1966 was redesignated VMF(AW)-333. The designation change reflected the increased all-weather capability of the "E" model.

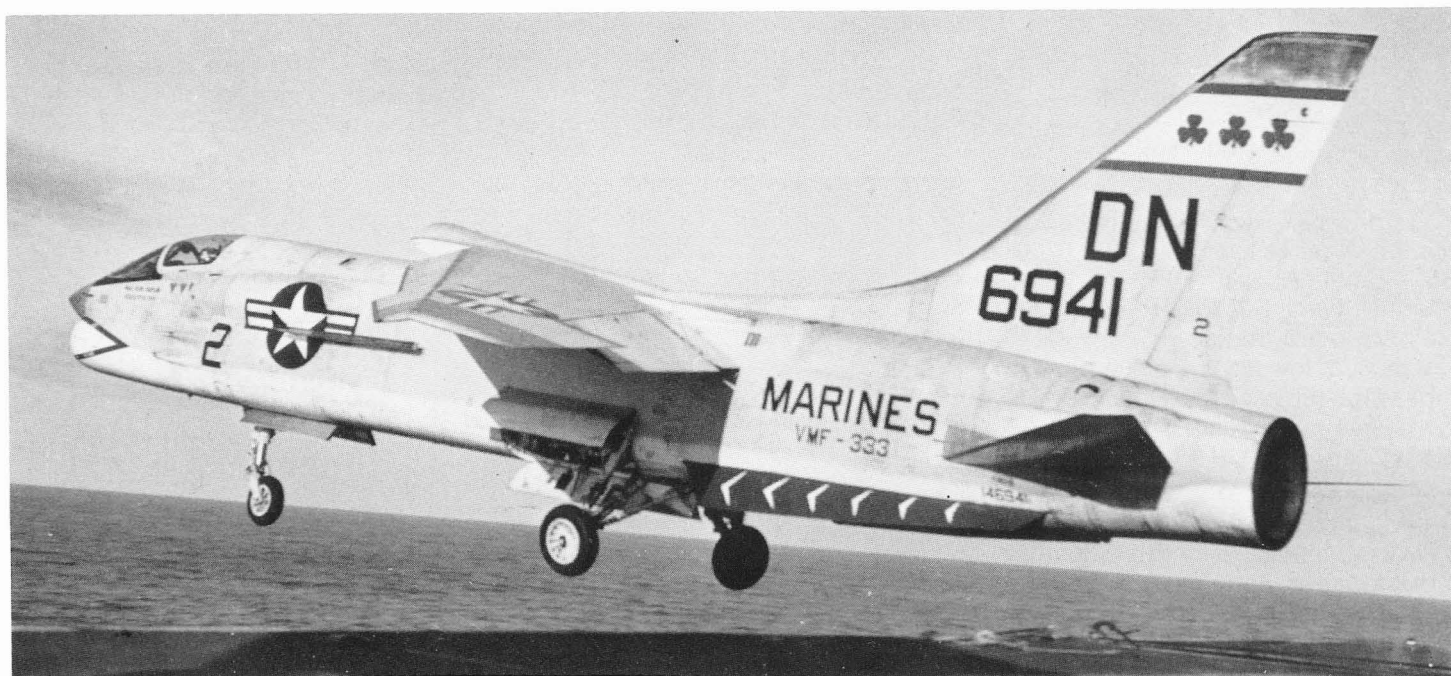
On 20 June 1968 Trip Trey was redesignated Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 333 (VMFA-333) in

response to replacing the F8-Es with McDonnell F-4J Phantom IIs. The Shamrocks became the first Marine F-4J squadron to deploy aboard a carrier when they embarked on the USS America in January 1971. VMFA-333 was assigned to the America (CVA-66) in July 1972 and on 11 September 1972, Major Tom "Bear" Lasseter and Captain John "Little-John" Cummings became the first all Marine crew to destroy a Mig-21. The F-4Js were replaced by F-4Es which in turn were replaced by F-18A Hornets in October 1987.

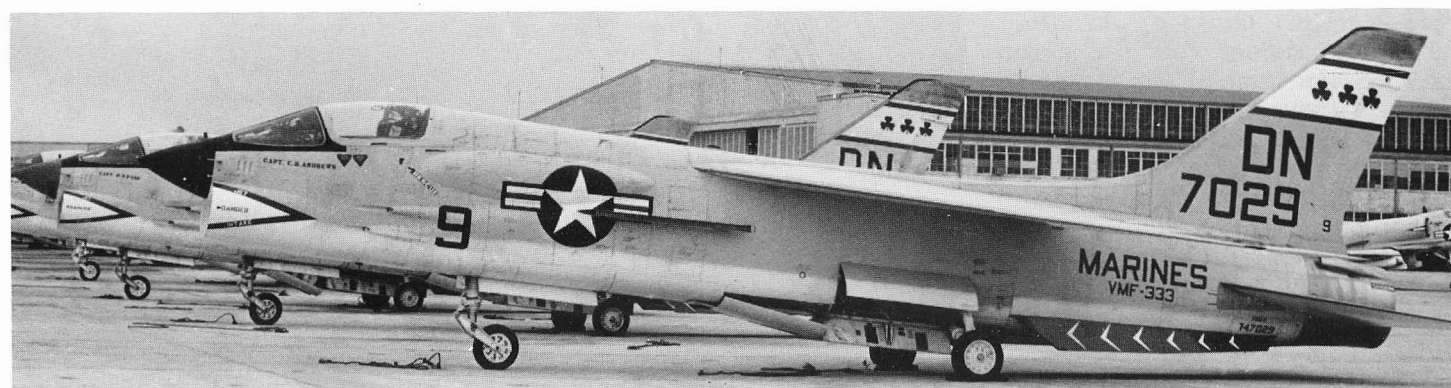


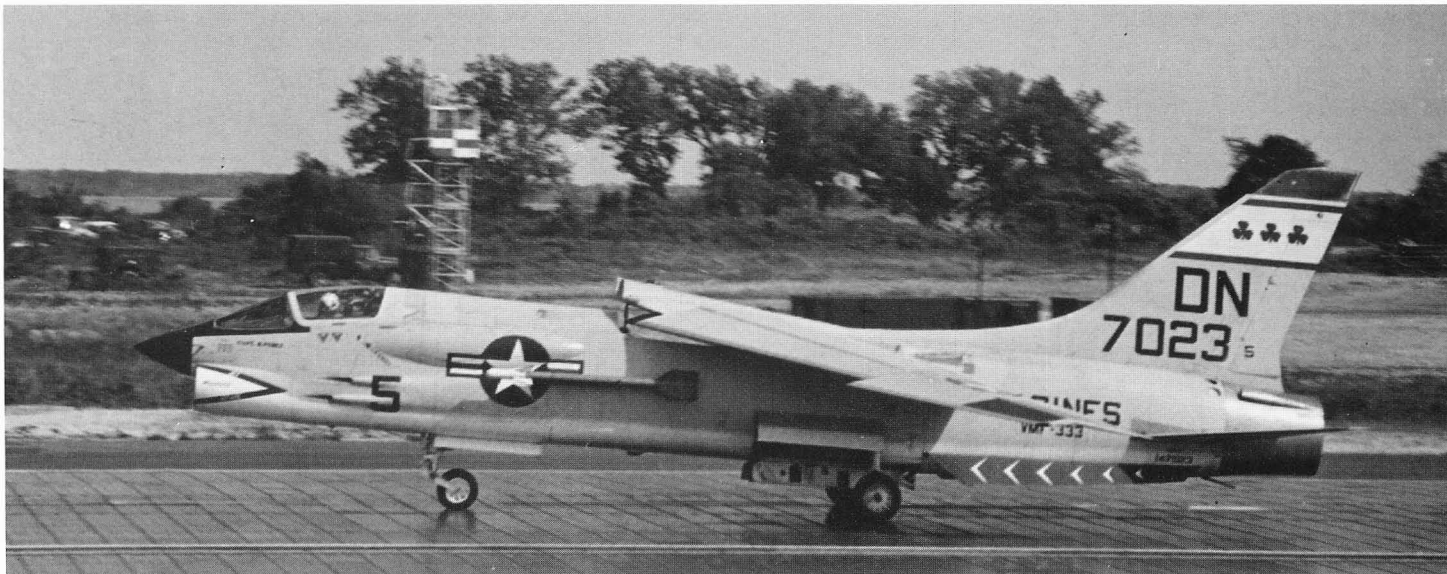


VMF-333 F-8Cs, 146943 and 146941, catapult off the Forrestal in 1961. Since VMF-333 was the first squadron to receive the F8U-2 (F-8C) the Bu Nos are consecutive. Note rapid discoloration of the painted afterburner section. (USMC)



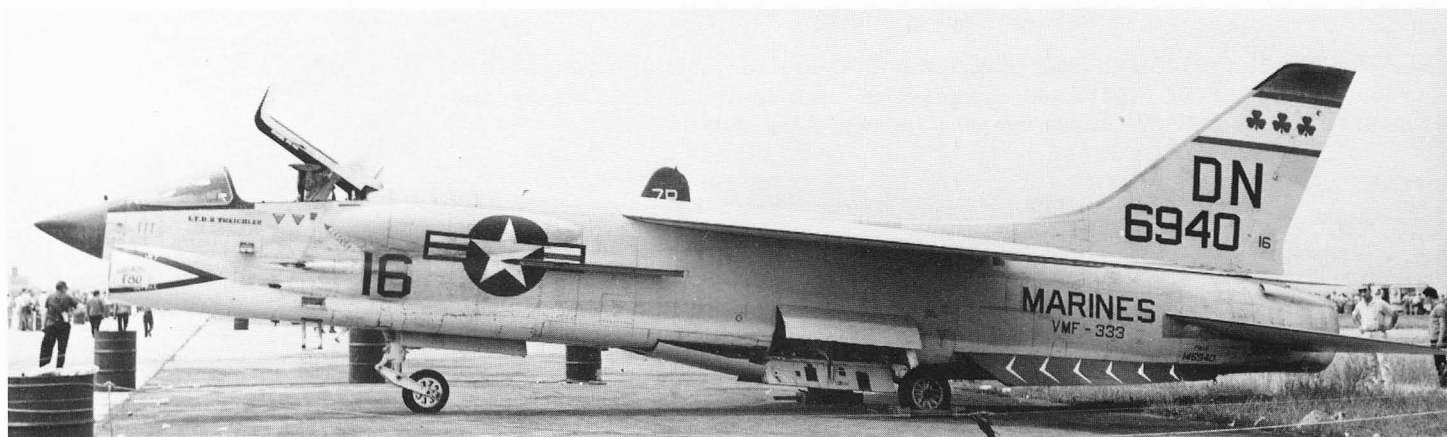
Flightline at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., on 3-21-62 with F8U-2 (F-8C) 147029 in foreground; markings were green. (USMC via Roos)





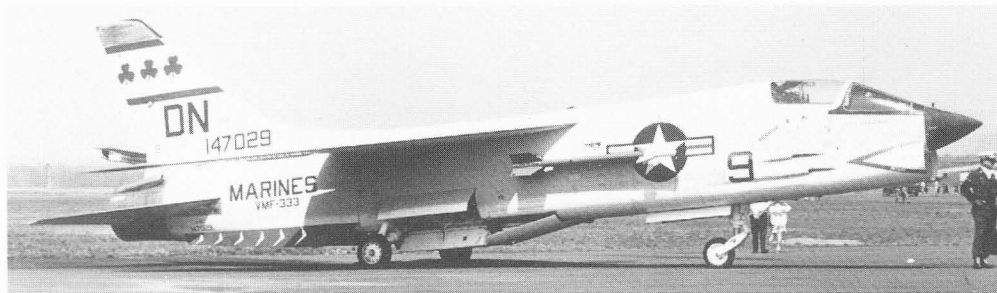
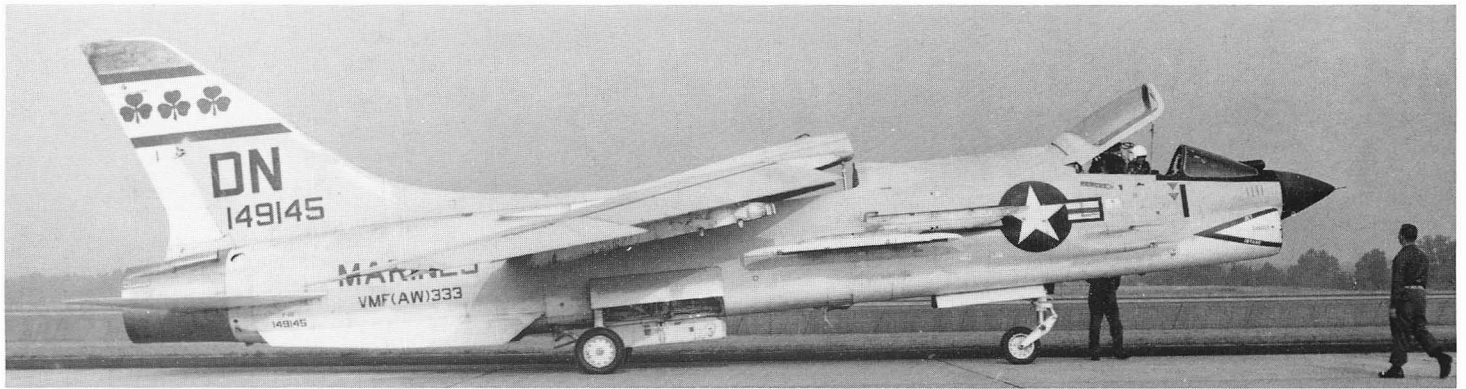
F8U-2 (F-8C) 147023 taxiing with practice sidewinder at Cherry Point, N.C., on 5-12-62. (via D. Ostrowski)

F8U-2 (F-8C) 146940 with "Lt. D.R. Treichler" painted under canopy. (R.T. O'Dell via D. Menard)

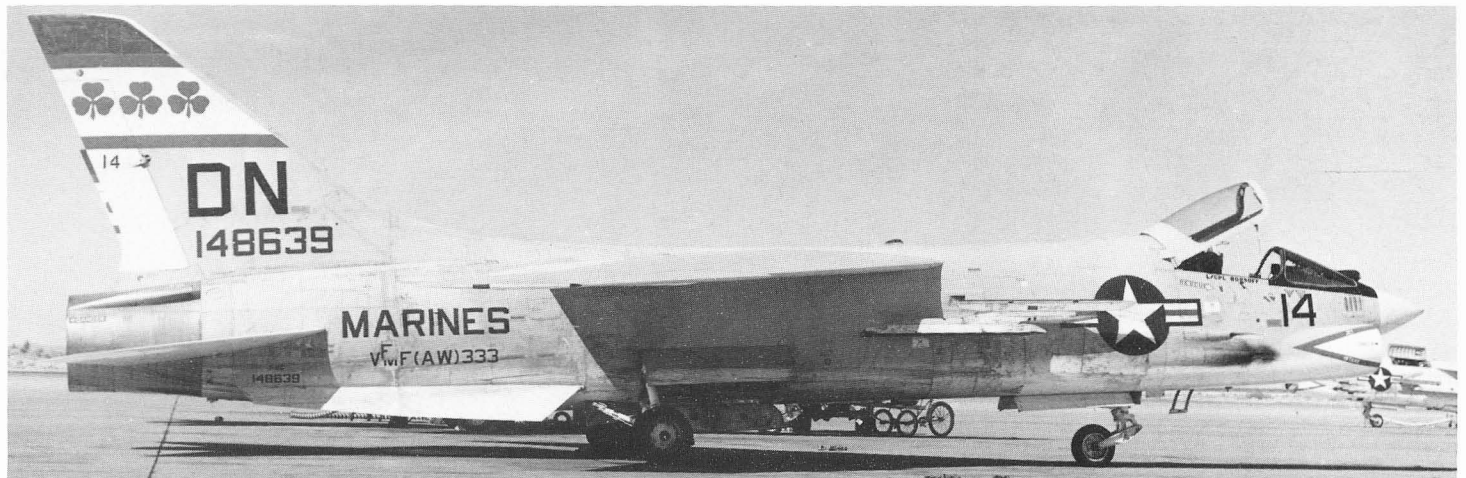


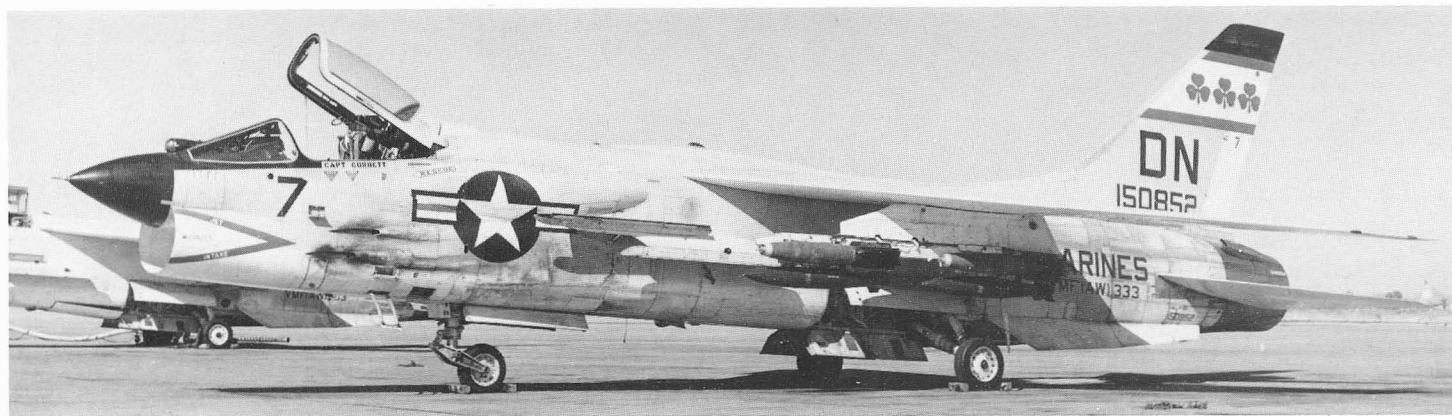
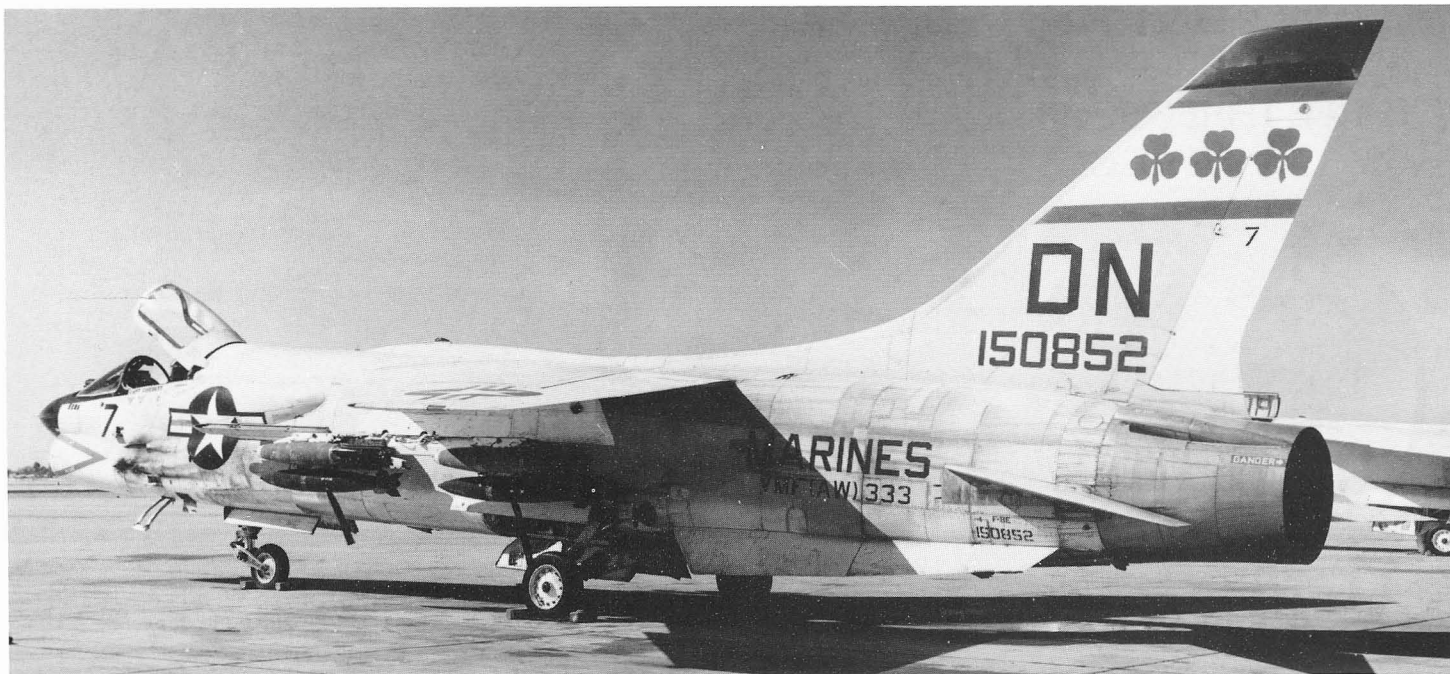
VMF-333 F-8Cs prepare to launch from the CE-1 MOD 3 SATS catapult during rapid cycle capability tests of the catapult at NATF, NAS Lakehurst, N.J. on 9-16-65. (USN)





VMF(AW)-333 F-8E 149145 with wing pylon fitted. (D. Ostrowski via Menard) F-8C 147029 in 1965. (via Burger) F-8E 149175 with multiple ejector racks and F-8D 148639 on the ramp at MCAS Yuma, on 3-11-67 during weapons training. (Clay Jansson)

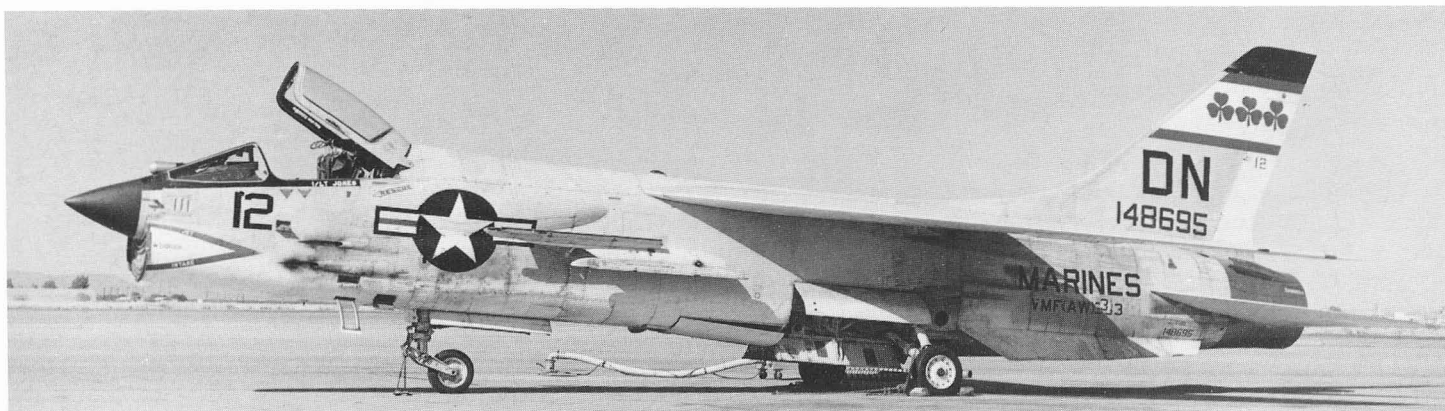




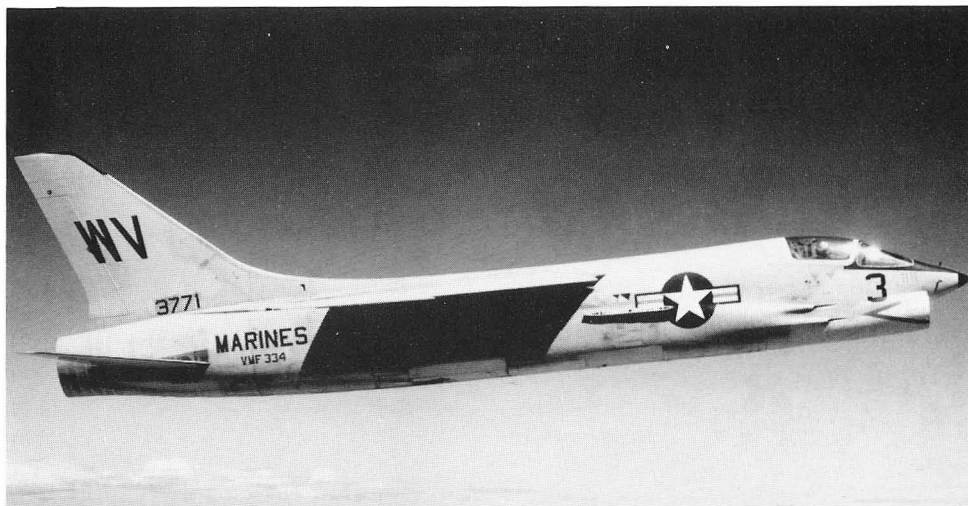
Two views of F-8E 150852 with two snakeyes and two MK-82s under each wing prior to a mission at MCAS Yuma 3-11-67. (Swisher)

VMF(AW)-333 "FIGHTING SHAMROCKS"

F-8D 148695 on the ramp at Yuma on 3-11-67. Note gun-port stains and rocket exhaust stains on the rear fuselage. (Clay Jansson)



**MARINE FIGHTER
SQUADRON
THREE THREE FOUR
VMF-334 "FALCONS"**



VMF-334 was the first West Coast F-8 squadron. F8U-1 (F-8A) 143771 above sports the short-lived "WV" tail code. (USMC via W.T. Larkins) Four VMF-334 F8U-1s off the Southern California coast; note the red tail stripes. (John Olsen via Jansson)

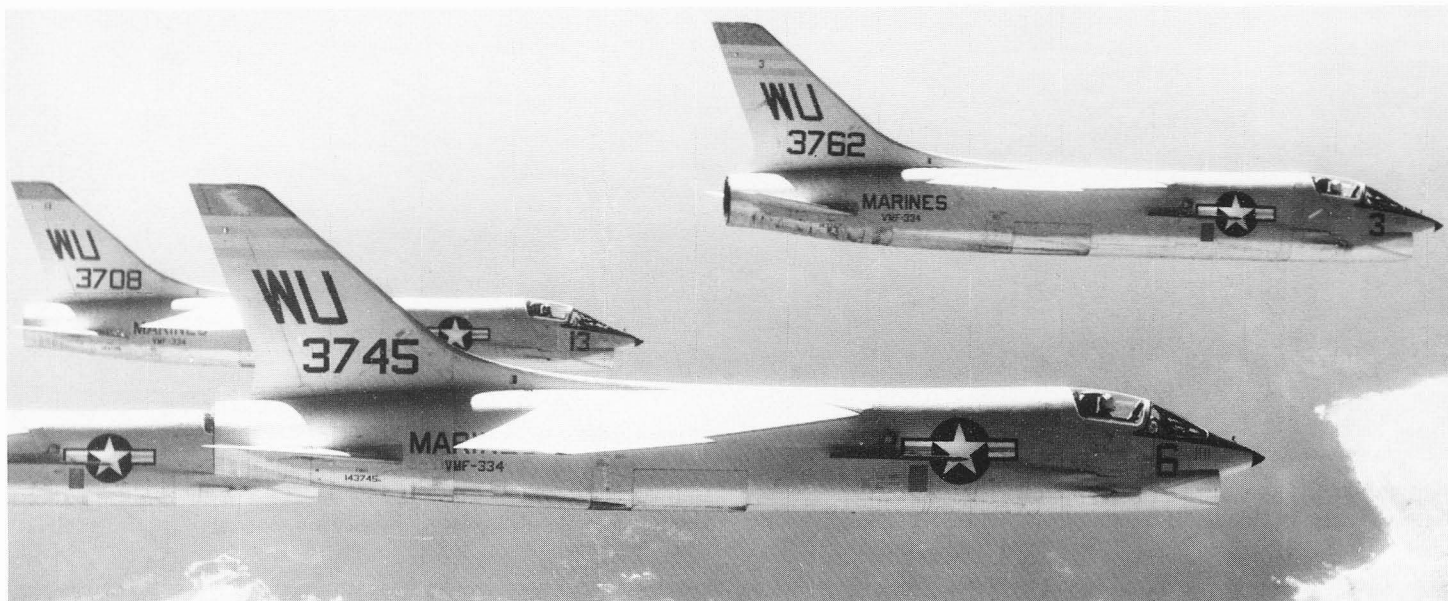
The Falcons were commissioned on 1 August 1943 as Marine Scout-Bombing Squadron 334 (VMSB-334). Equipped with Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bombers and assigned to MAG-33 MCAS El Toro, California, the squadron remained stateside throughout the war and was deactivated on 10 October 1944.

In May 1952 the squadron was reactivated and redesignated Marine Attack Squadron 334 (VMA-334). The Falcons flew Grumman F9F-4 Panthers from MCAS Miami, Florida, until receiving North American FJ-2 Furys in the summer of 1954. VMA-334 was redesignated VMF-334 on 1 July 1954. The FJ-2s were replaced by FJ-3Ms and in January 1957 VMF-334 deployed to NAS Atsugi, Japan.

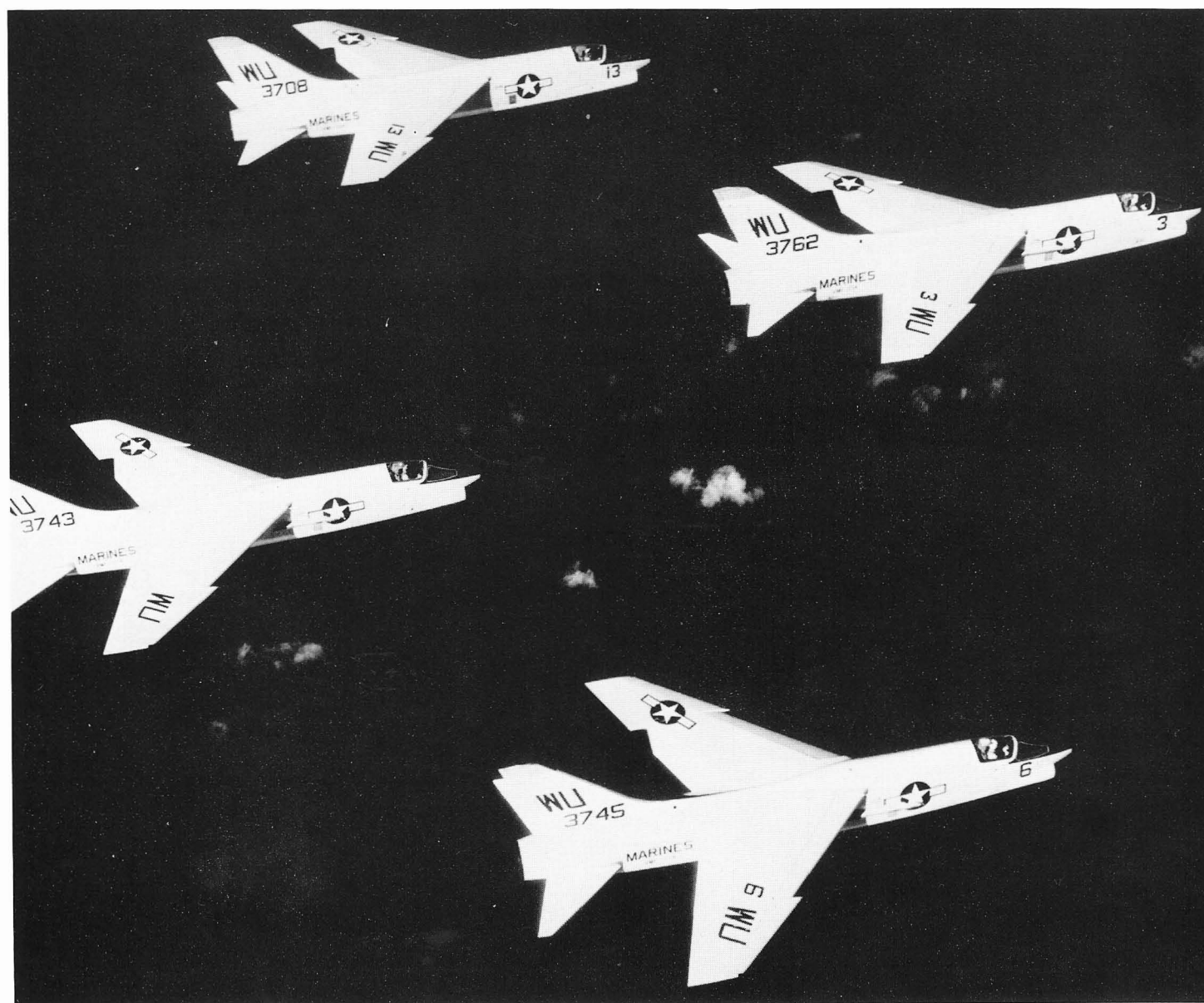
January 1958 found the Falcons stationed at MCAS El Toro where they became the first West Coast Marine squadron to equip with the new supersonic F8U-1 Crusader. VMF-334 flew the F8U-1 until 1961 when the squadron was reequipped with the F8U-2 (F-8C). The F-8C was flown until June 1967 when the Falcons became the first Marine squadron to receive the new McDonnell F-4J Phantom.

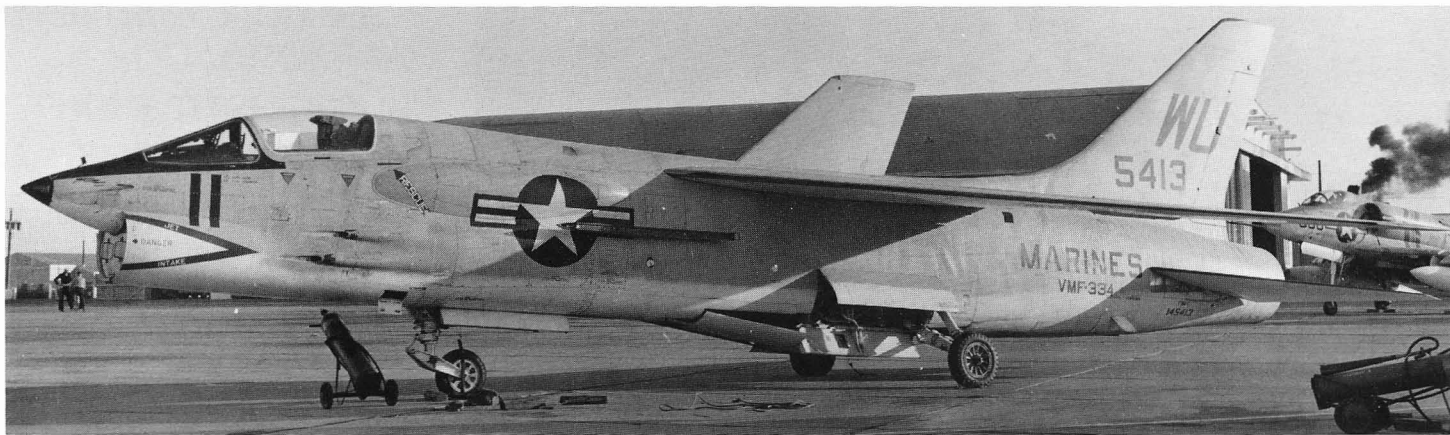
With the Phantom came the squadron's redesignation to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 334 (VMFA-334). The Falcons went to war in September 1968 at Da Nang Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, and stayed there until August 1969 when they were withdrawn to Japan. VMFA-334 was decommissioned in 1971.





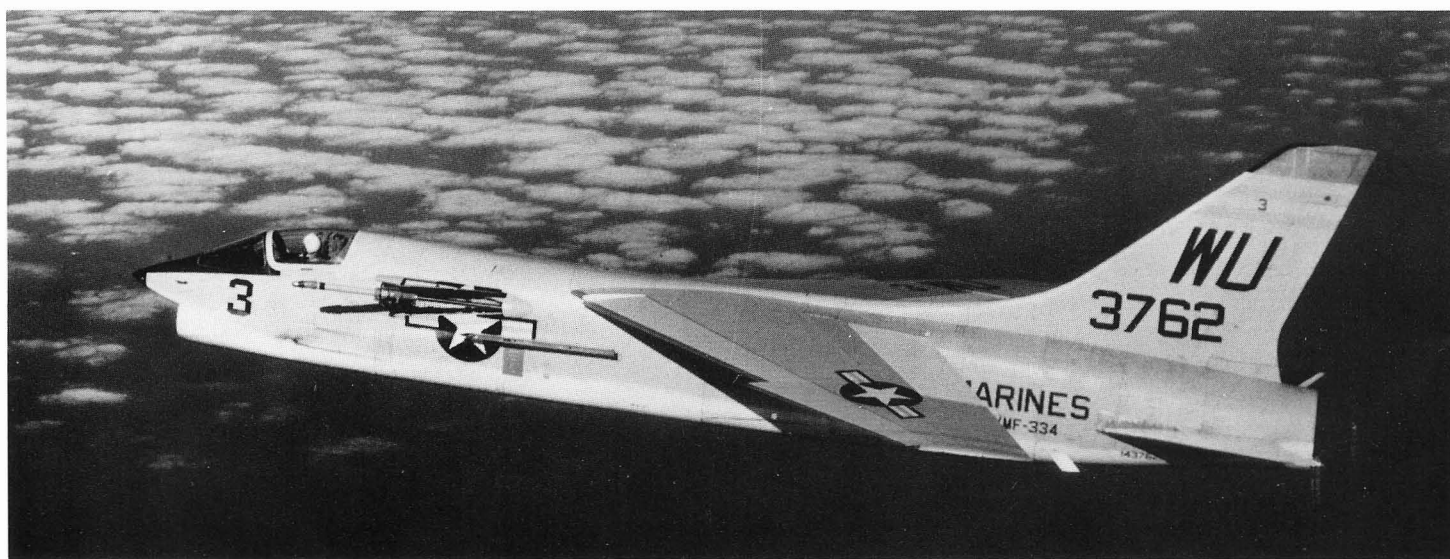
Close up and overhead view of F8U-1s 143708, 143743, 143745 and 143762. (John Olsen via Jansson)



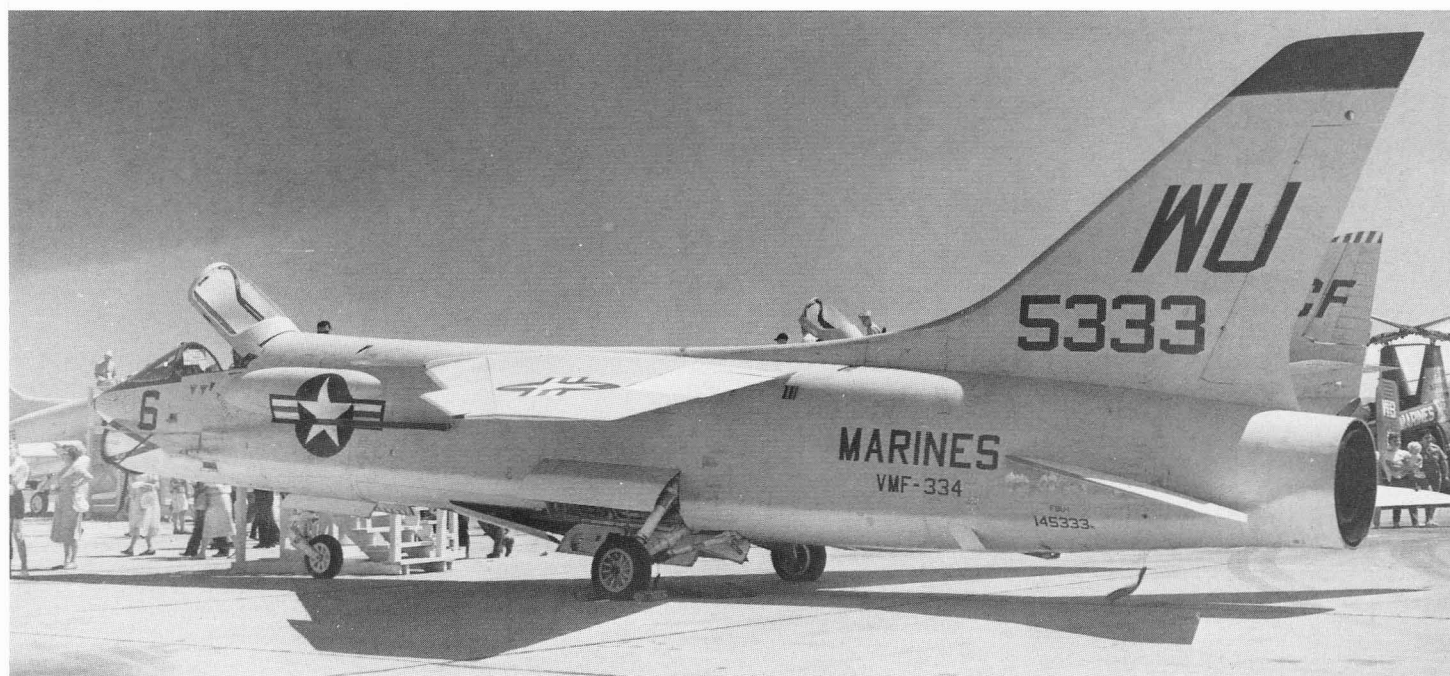


VMF-334 F8U-1 (F-8A) 145413 at MCAS Yuma on 12-3-59. Note that one wing is folded and one is down. (Swisher)

VMF-334 F8U-1 (F-8A) 143762 in flight with refueling probe extended on 1-6-60. (John Olsen via Jansson)

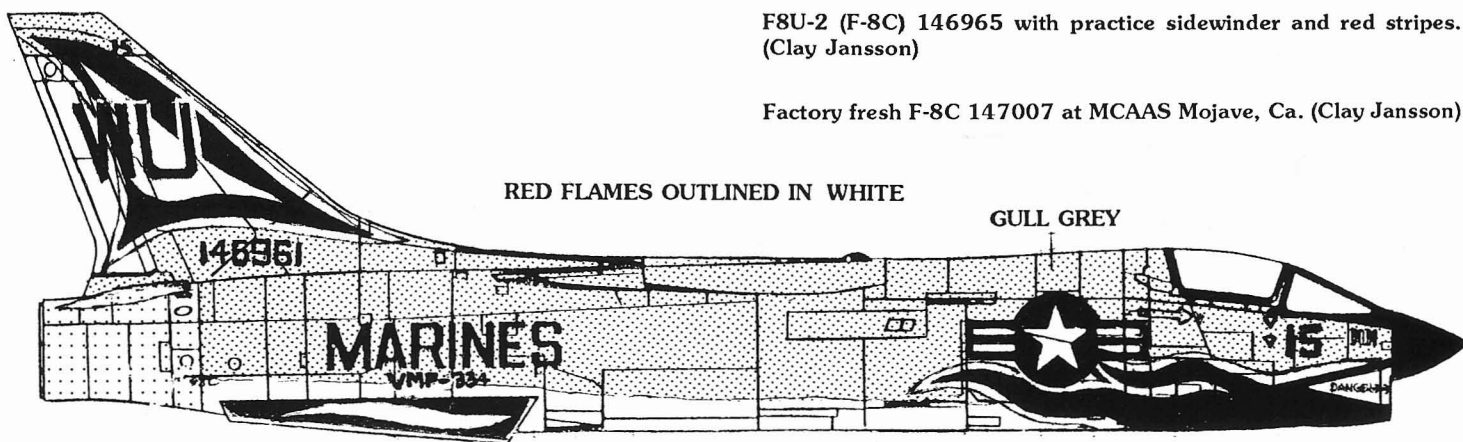


Factory-fresh F8U-1 (F-8A) 145333 at MCAS El Toro on 5-21-60. (Swisher)

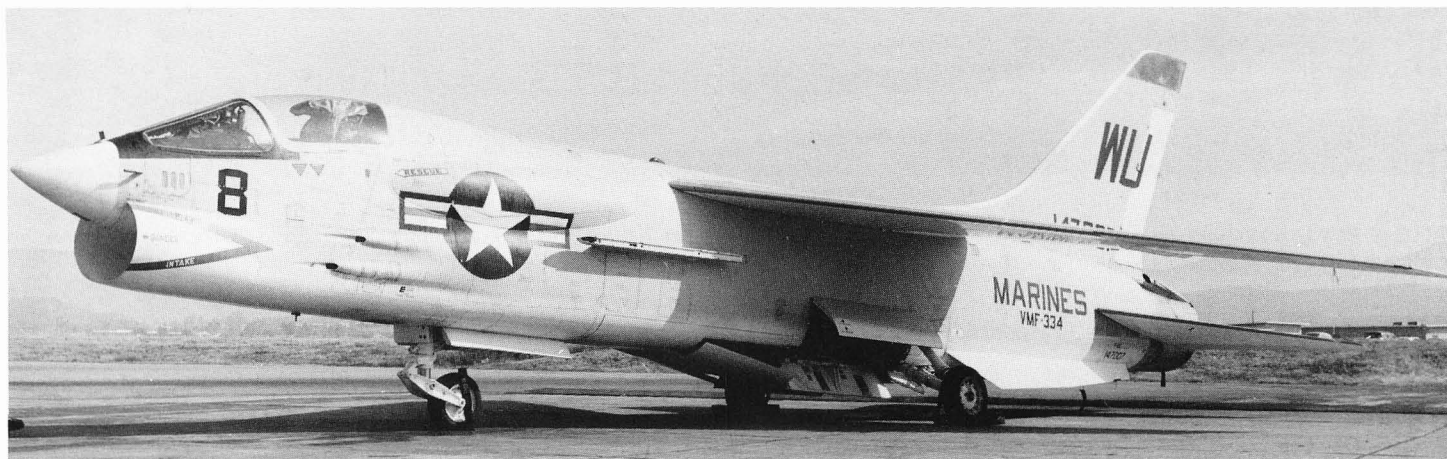




F8U-2 (F-8C) 146965 with practice sidewinder and red stripes.
(Clay Jansson)



Factory fresh F-8C 147007 at MCAAS Mojave, Ca. (Clay Jansson)



F8U-2 (F-8C) 146920 with red tail and wing stripes and red and white ventral fin and speed brake stripes. (Clay Jansson)





VMF(AW)-314 F-4B 149457 and VMF-334 F-8C 146913 refuel from VMGR-352 KC-130F 148891 during the 1963 MCAS El Toro air show. (via Jansson)



F8U-2 (F-8C) 146936 with barber striped ventrals and speed brake at MCAS El Toro. (Clay Jansson)

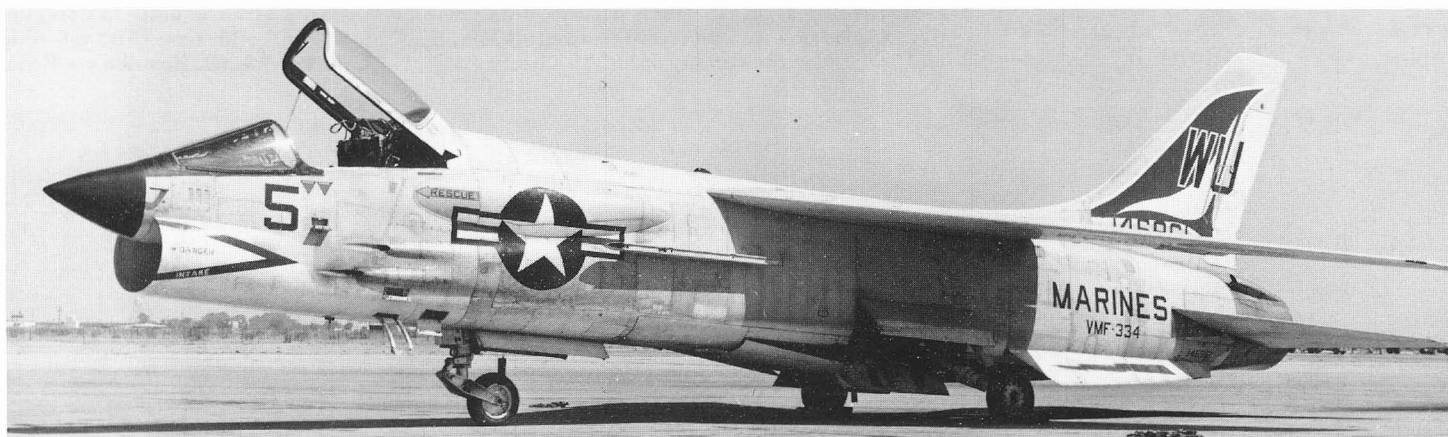
F8U-2 (F-8C) 146970 with freshly painted "USS Oriskany" on the fuselage on 9-16-61. (Swisher)





F-8C 146913 with red lightning bolts and eagle on 7-4-65 at Van Nuys ANG. (Swisher)

F-8C 146913 again on 7-4-66 with red and white tail and ventral design. (Donato via Jansson)



F-8C 146961 at MCAS Yuma in 1966. (Al Adams via Jansson)

F-8C 145559 with red bird and lightning on 5-20-67. (Harry Gann)



MARINE FIGHTER SQUADRON THREE FIVE ONE VMF-351

VMF-351 was originally activated as Marine Observation Squadron 351 on 1 March 1943 at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina. The squadron moved to nearby Bogue Field in May 1944 and then to MCAS Mojave, California, in September. In early 1945 while at MCAS Santa Barbara VMO-351 was redesignated VMF-351. The squadron entered the war in the Philippines in June 1945 and was subsequently deactivated at San Diego on 9 November 1945.

The squadron was reactivated on 1 July 1946 as part of the Marine Air Reserve at NAS Atlanta, Georgia. During the Korean War VMF-351 augmented the fleet with personnel and became a paper squadron until April 1951 when new personnel were once again assigned.

In 1958 the squadron was redesignated Marine Attack Squadron 351 (VMA-351) when AD-4 Skyraiders were assigned. VMA-351 became VMF-351 again on 1 July 1962 when the Skyraiders were replaced by FJ-4/4B (AF-IE) Furies.

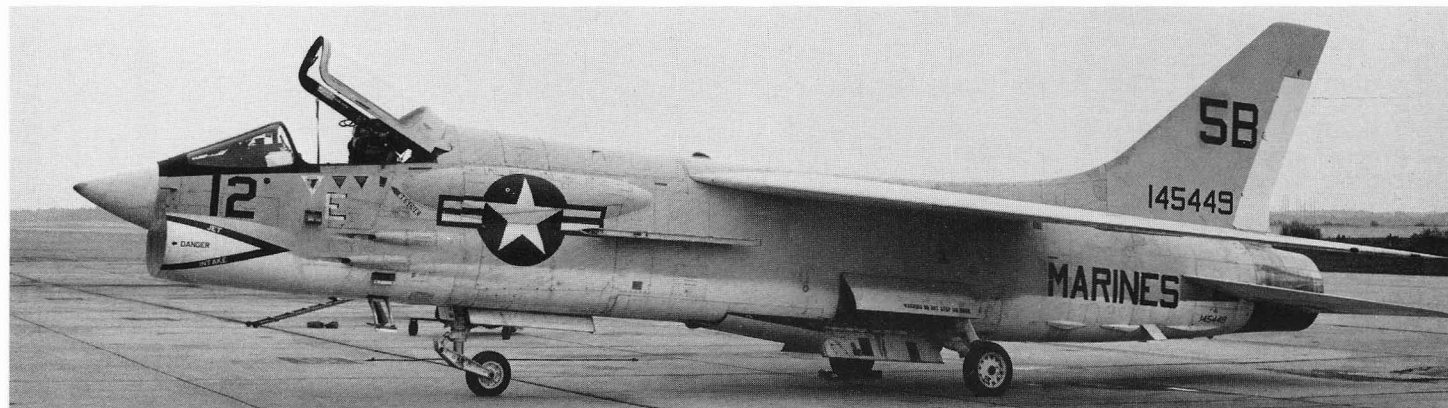
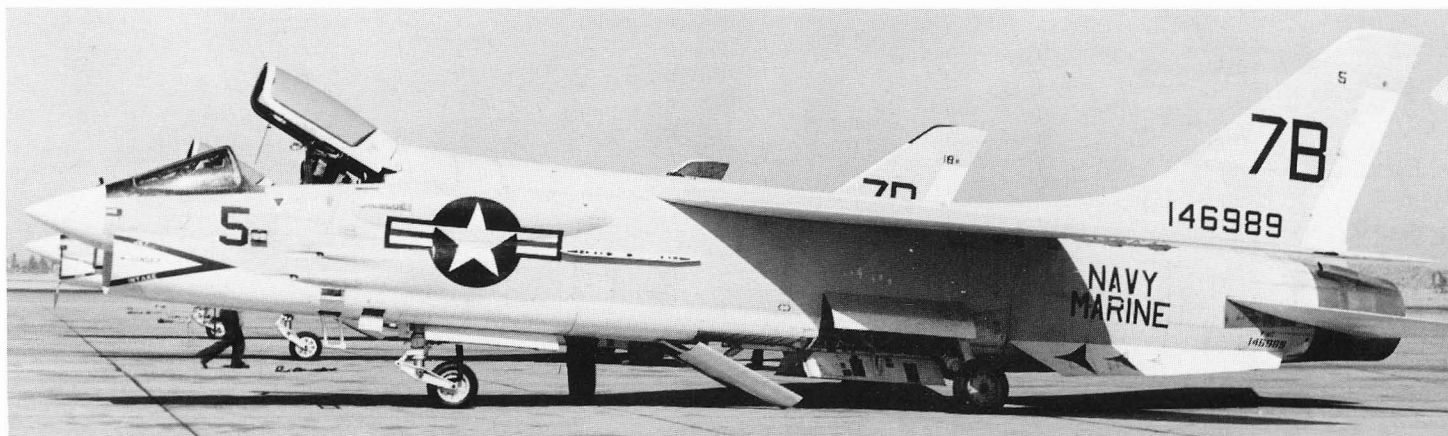


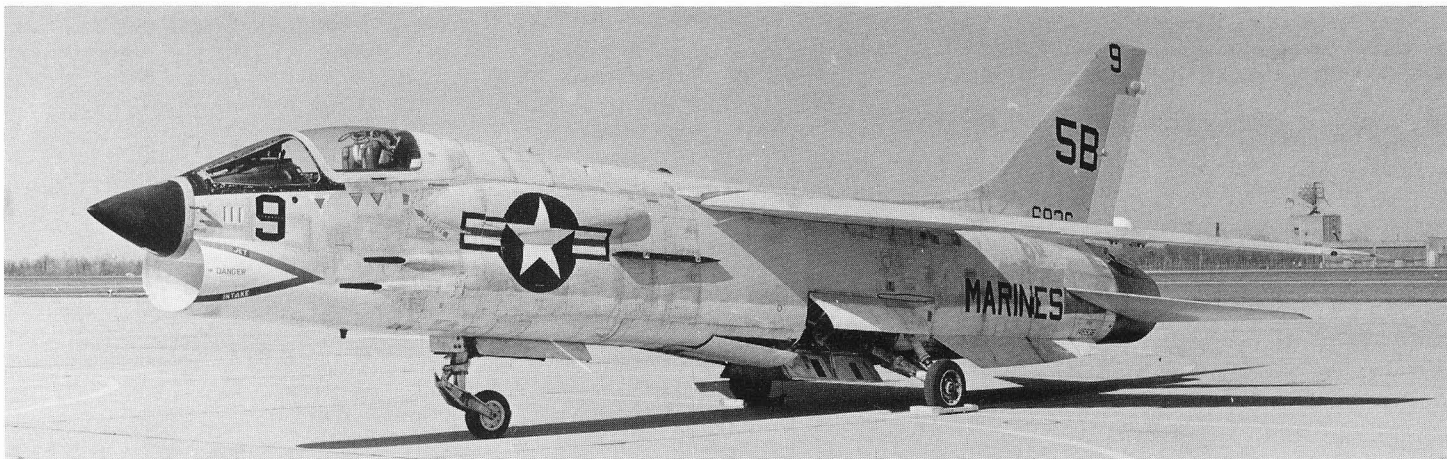
In February 1965 the squadron received its first F-8A Crusader. These were augmented by some F-8Ls and by 1970 the squadron was primarily equipped with the F-8K. The F-8K was flown through 1975.

TF-8A 143795 as used by VMF-351 in September 1968. (D. Kasulka via Jansson)



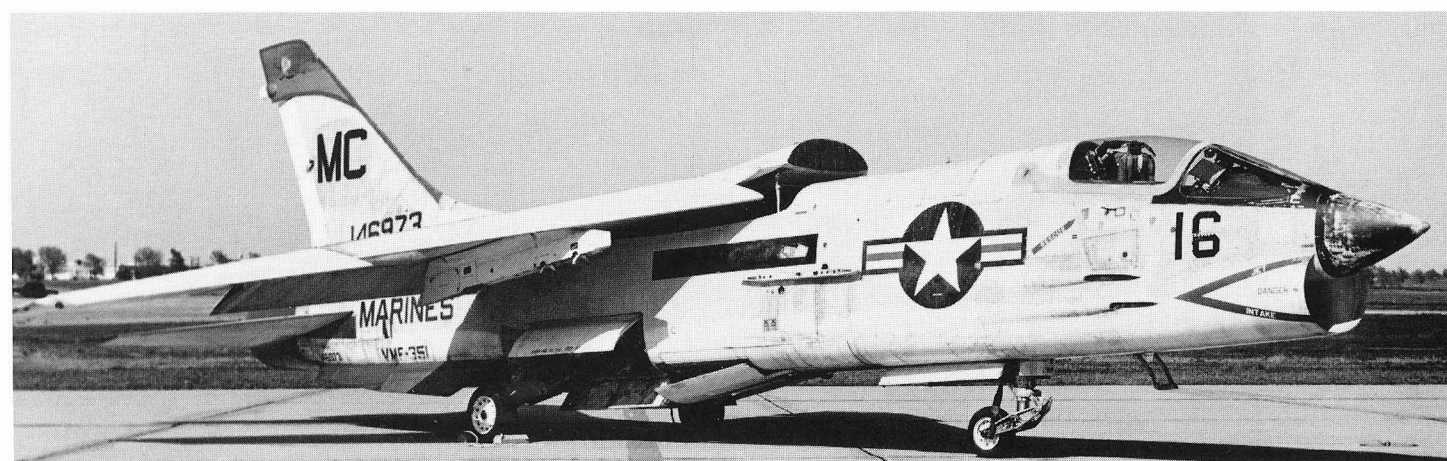
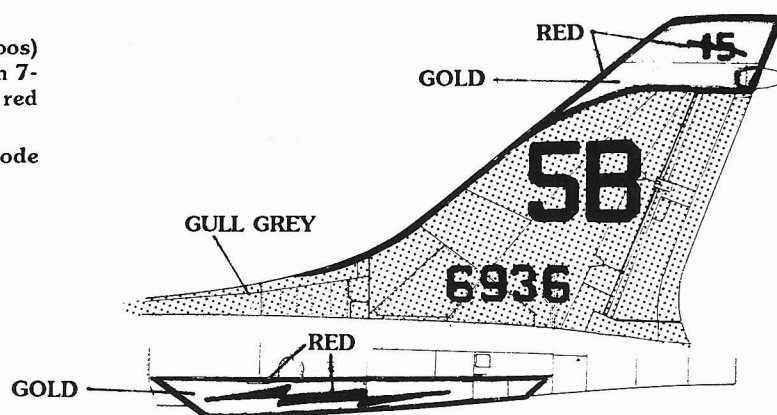
F-8C 146989 at MCAS Yuma in 1966. This aircraft was shared between VMF-351 and VF-672. (Al Adams via Jansson) Bottom - VMF-351 F-8L 145449 with new "5B" tail code and "E" under the canopy at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., on 8-6-70. (D. Kasulka via Roos)





VMF-351 F-8K 146936 at NAF Detroit on 5-8-71. (via Fred Roos)
 F-8K 146936 taxis out at NAS Atlanta with twin Zuni tubes on 7-10-71. Wing, tail and ventral fin markings are gold bordered by red with red lightning bolt on the ventral fin. (Don Spering)
 F-8K 146973 in gold and red markings with new "MC" tail code in 1972. (Geer via Jansson)

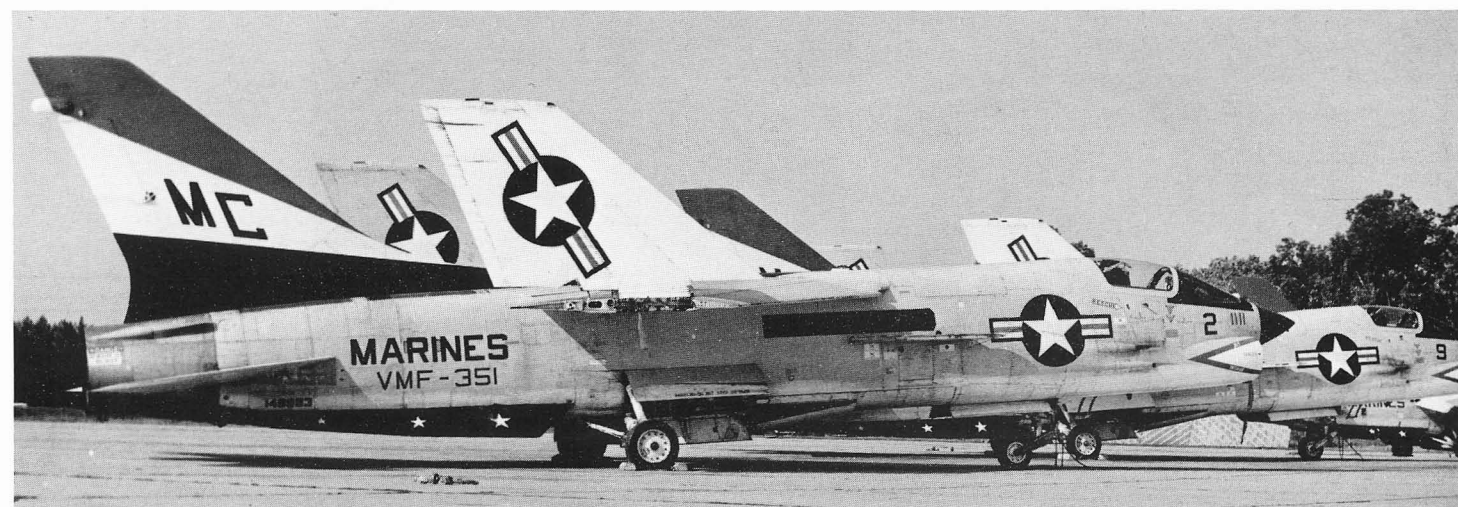
**MARINE FIGHTER
 SQUADRON
 THREE FIVE ONE
 VMF-351**





VMF-351 F-8Ks 146952 (MC/6) and 146941 (MC/4) in formation with VMFA-323 F-4Bs 151435 and 151439 in 1973. (Don Sperings)

F-8Ks 146910 (MC/4) and 146983 (MC/2) at NAS Atlanta in 1973 with colorful red, white and blue tails and blue ventral fins with white stars.



**MARINE ALL WEATHER
FIGHTER SQUADRON
FOUR FIVE ONE
VMF(AW)-451
"WARLORDS"**



Marine Fighter Squadron 451 (VMF-451) was activated on 15 February 1944 at MCAAS Mojave, California. VMF-451 flew the Chance Vought F4U-1 Corsairs and was transferred to MCAS El Centro on 1 January 1945 and subsequently deployed to the Pacific aboard the USS Bunker Hill (CV-17). The Warlords participated in the amphibious landings at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. After being credited with 30 kills VMF-451 was deactivated on 10

September 1945.

On 1 July 1946 VMF-451 was reactivated as part of the Marine Air Reserve program at NAS Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. Initially equipped with Corsairs, the squadron transitioned to Grumman F9F-2 Panthers when they were called to active duty on 1 March 1951 in response to the Korean War. For the next two years the Warlords alternated between El Toro and Kaneohe, Hawaii.

VMF-451 traded its F9F-2s for North American FJ-2 Furys and deployed to NAS Atsugi, Japan, on 20 October 1954. Returning to El Toro in July 1957, the FJ-2s were replaced by FJ-4 Furys and on 30 September 1958 they redeployed to Ping-Tung, North Taiwan, until returning to El Toro in November 1959.

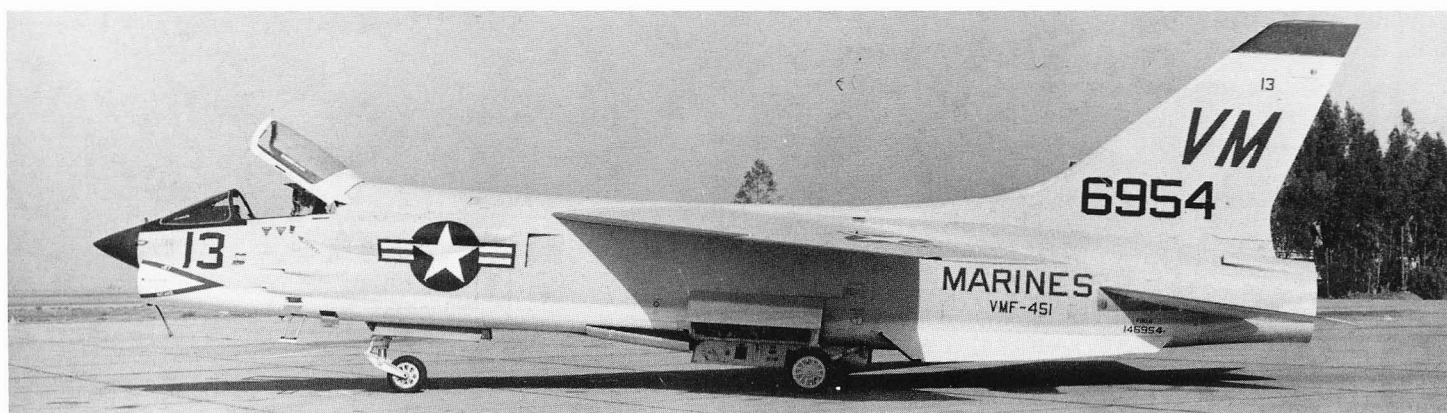
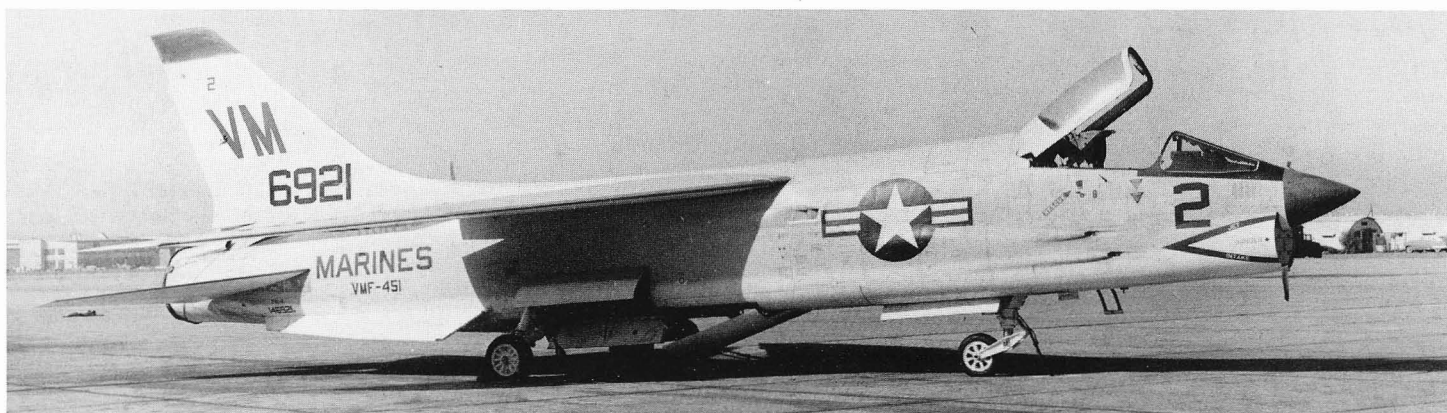
Once at El Toro the squadron received the F8U-2 (F-8C) Crusader of which 28 were on hand at the end of 1960. In mid-1961 the squadron transitioned to the F8U-2N (F-8D) and was redesignated Marine All Weather Fighter Squadron 451 (VMF(AW)-451) on 1 July 1961.

In 1961 another new aircraft entered the Marine inventory, the Lockheed KC-130F Hercules refueling plane. The Warlords became the first

squadron to truly test the 130's abilities when on 4 January 1962 the squadron took off from El Toro on its first leg of a 7,000 mile ferry flight or Trans Pac to NAS Atsugi. This first successful Trans Pac took seven days including a one-day delay near Midway due to excessive head winds of 160 knots. Fifteen KC-130s participated in the flight which cost approximately one-third less than ship and cut the average transition time from 45 days to 7.

The Warlords returned from Japan to MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina, on 1 February 1963. During April through May 1965 they took part in the Dominican Republic intervention. A carrier deployment occurred from 24 August 1965 through 7 April 1966 as part of Carrier Air Wing-8 (CVW-8) onboard the USS Forrestal (CVA-59). In 1967 the F-8Ds were replaced by F-8Es and on 1 February 1968 the squadron's designation was changed to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron-451 (VMFA-451) when the McDonnell F-4J Phantom was received. The F-4J was replaced by the F-4S which was replaced in 1987 with McDonnell Douglas FA-18A Hornets.

VMF-451 F8U-2s (F-8Cs) at MCAS El Toro in March 1960 with no color markings added. (Clay Jansson)





VMF(AW)-451 F8U-2N (F-8D) 147925 at NAS North Island on 8-19-61. (Swisher)



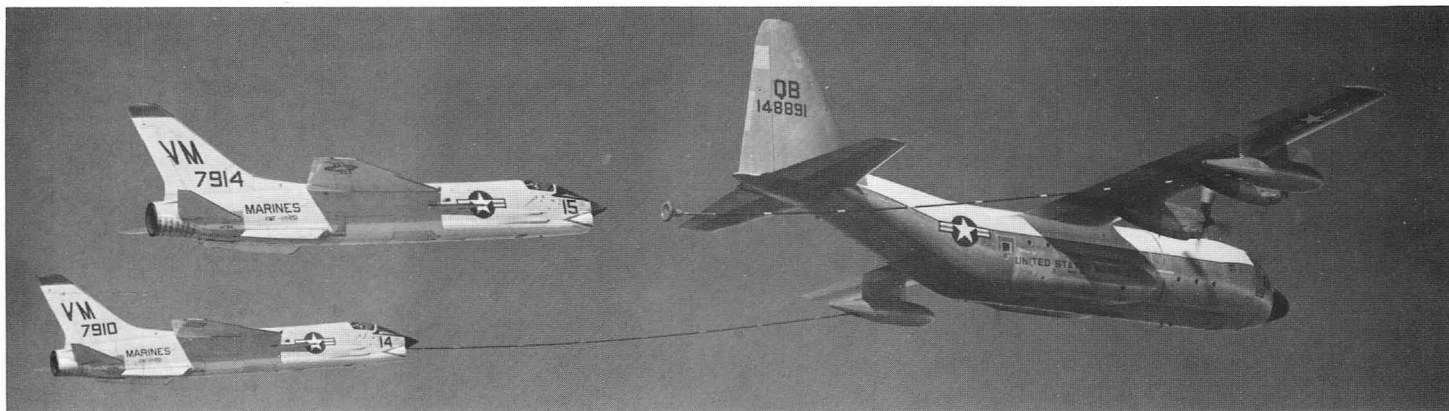
F8U-2 (F-8C) 146939 with blue wing, tail and ventral fin stripes with white stars at NAS North Island in January 1961. (Clay Jansson)



VMF(AW)-451 F-8D 148679 at MCAS Beaufort, S.C., on 12-9-63. (USMC)

VMF(AW)-451 F-8Ds 148657, 148650, and 148671 with sidewinders and Zunis loaded on the flightline at Roosevelt Roads, P.R., on 5-5-65. (USMC via Roos)





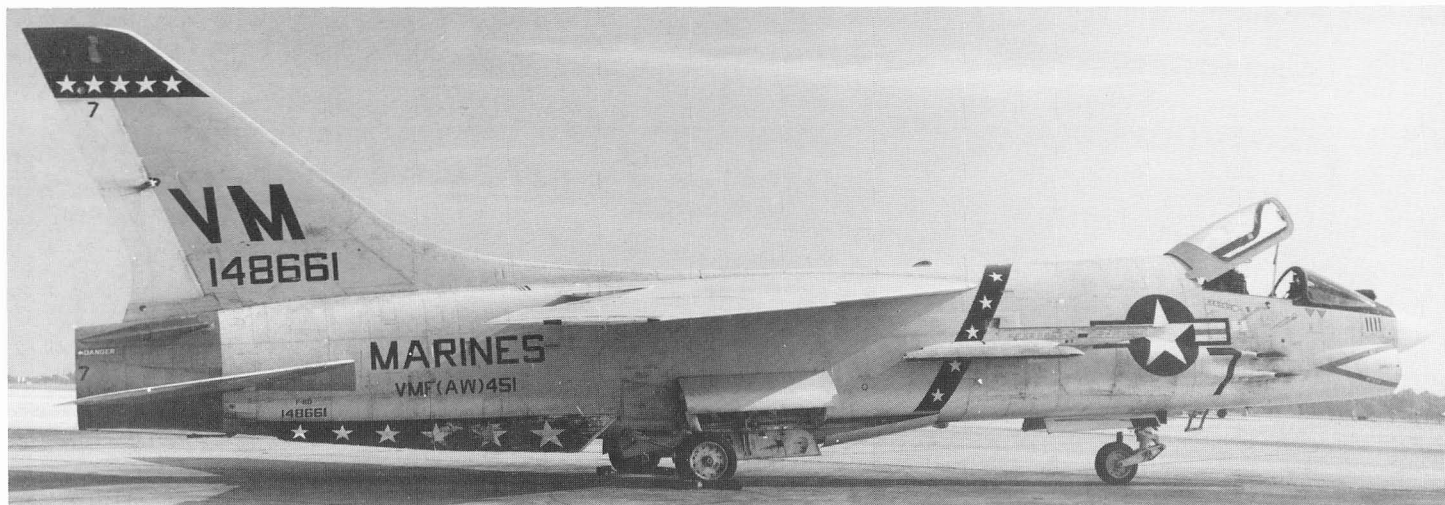
Two VMF(AW)-451 F-8Ds, 147910 and 147914, refuel from VMGR-352 KC-130F 148891 over the pacific. (via Clay Jansson)



VMF(AW)-451 F-8Ds 147054, 148630, and 148658 during the USS Forrestal's (CVA-59) 1965/1966 Mediterranean cruise. The Crusaders carried CVW-8's "AJ" tail code. Note the USMC logo on the tail of 148658. (USN via Bob Lawson)

VMF(AW)-451 F-8D 148661 with blue wing, fuselage, tail and ventral fin stripes covered with white stars at MCAS Beaufort on 5-29-67. (Swisher)

VMF(AW)-451 "WARLORDS"



MARINE FIGHTER SQUADRON FIVE ONE ONE VMF-511

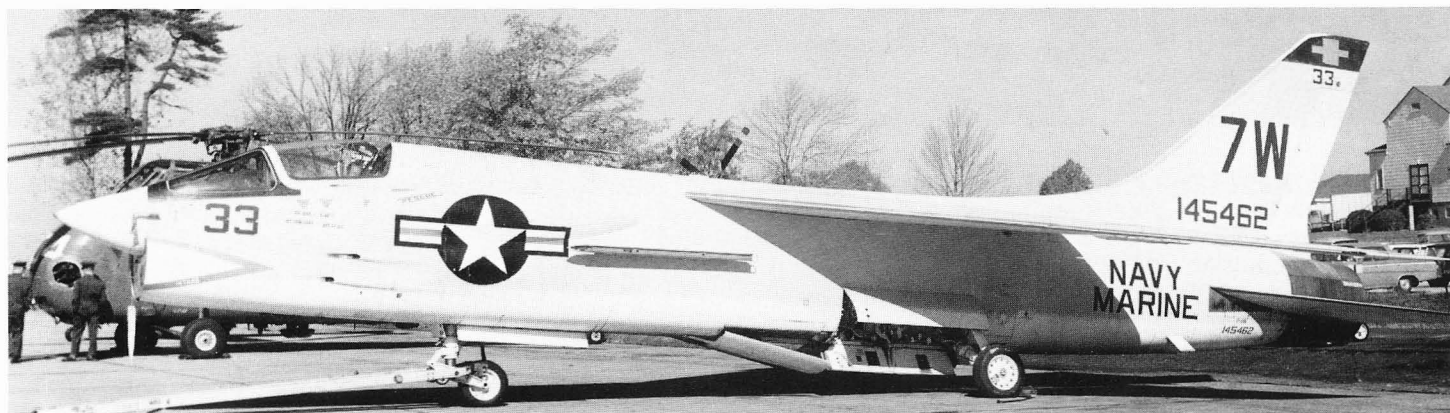
VMF-511 was activated on 1 January 1944 at New Bern, North Carolina. The squadron was transferred to MCAS Mojave, California, in September 1944 and to MCAS Santa Barbara in December 1944. In February 1945 VMF-511 sailed for the war zone and participated in the Okinawa and Boreno campaigns flying the F4U Corsair.

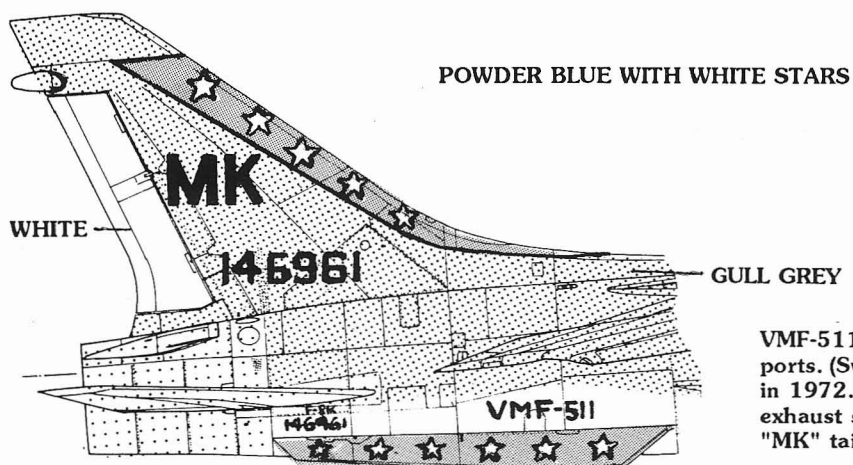
After cessation of hostilities the squadron returned to Santa Barbara in November 1945. VMF-511 was deactivated on 11 March 1946 at MCAS El Toro, California.

On 15 April 1958 VMF-511 was reactivated as a Marine Air Reserve Training Detachment, Marine Air Reserve Training Command, Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. Originally equipped with North American FJ-3 Furys the squadron transitioned to FJ-4/4B Furys in 1962. VMF-511 acquired the F-8B Crusader in 1965 and the F-8A in 1968. F-8Ls replaced the F-8As and F-8Bs in 1970 and F-8Ks replaced the F-8Ls in 1971. The squadron was deactivated in 1973.



F-8L 145451 as used by VMF-511 in 1974 (via Burger) F-8B 145462 as used by VMF-511 at NAS Willow Grove in 1966; note red cross on fin tip. (Esposito via Jansson) F-8A 143769 as used by VMF-511 at Willow Grove in 1968 (Esposito via Jansson)

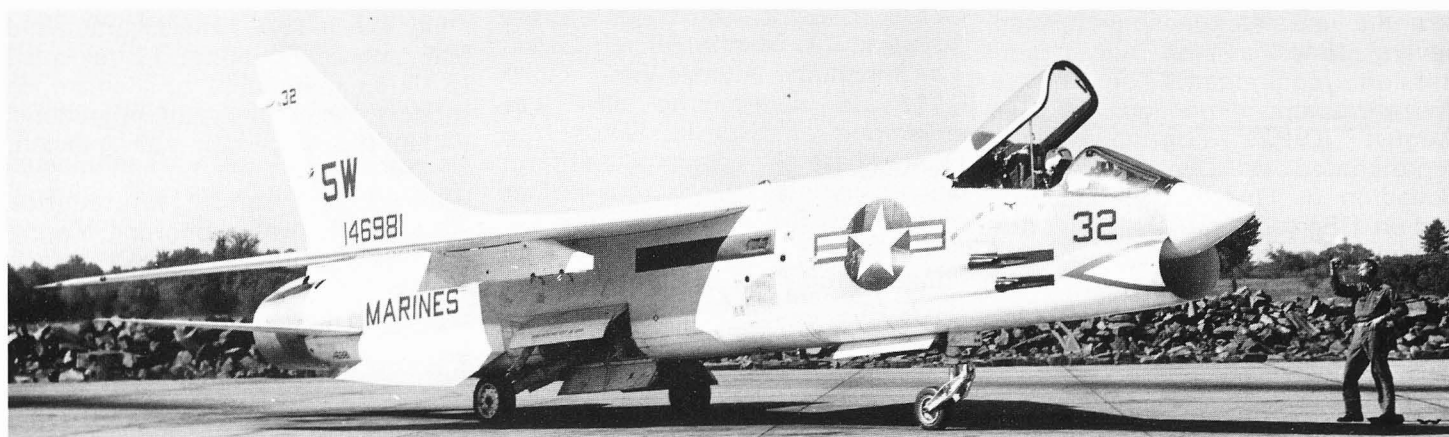




MARINE FIGHTER SQUADRON FIVE ONE ONE VMF-511



VMF-511 F-8L 145431 at MASDC on 5-11-71; note black gun-ports. (Swisher) VMF-511 F-8K 146981 at NAS Willow Grove, Pa., in 1972. Note the wing pylons and black gun ports and fuselage exhaust stripe. (D. Kasulka via Jansson) F-8K 145572 with new "MK" tail code in late 1972. (Fred Roos/Naval Fighters)



HEADQUARTERS AND MAINTENANCE SQUADRONS

Headquarters and Maintenance Squadrons are tasked with performing tactical, logistical, maintenance and administrative support for units attached to the Marine Air Group (MAG).

HEADQUARTERS AND MAINTENANCE SQUADRON ELEVEN H & MS-11

On 1 December 1921, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 11 was activated as Flight 1, 2d Air Squadron, Marine Flying Field, Marine Barracks, Quantico, Virginia. Flying primarily observation aircraft, Marine pilots could always be counted on to support Marine forces with jury-rigged ordinance and medical evacuation when required. The 1920s saw the unit's designation changed several times as the needs and mission requirements of Marine Aviation were expanded. On 24 August 1922, Flight 1 was redesignated as Division 3, VO Squadron 3, First Aviation Group, and on 1 September 1924, Division 3 became Service Squadron, First Aviation Group. From this designation, it can be determined that the Squadron became primarily a maintenance unit in support of the First Aviation Group. During this period of time, the Marine Corps was flying the DeHavilland Aircraft, rated to be one of the fastest and maneuverable of its time. On 1 March 1929, the unit was again redesignated and remained Aviation Service Company 1, Aircraft Squadrons, East Coast Expeditionary Force until 18 January 1934, when it was redesignated Service Squadron 1M, Aircraft One, Fleet Marine Forces. On 1 December 1938, the unit was again redesignated: Headquarters and Service Battalion 1, 1st Marine Aircraft Group, Fleet Marine Force. During this period, the entire Marine Aviation community consisted of only 2 aircraft Groups,



which were considerably smaller than the groups we have today.

With the increasing of tensions between the Japanese and the United States, the Marine Corps began increasing its aviation assets. On 1 September 1941, the unit was redesignated as Headquarters and Service Battalion 11, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Subsequent to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the unit embarked for the South Pacific during October 1942 as Headquarters Squadron 11, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. On 9 November 1942, the unit was encamped at Espiritu Santo, the Group's base of operations, and from whence its tactical squadrons further embarked for combat duty at Guadalcanal. As a result of the concentration of United States forces in the Southern Pacific theatre of operations, the unit's designation was changed on 1 February 1944 to Headquarters Squadron 11, Marine Aircraft Group 11, Marine Air, South Pacific.

After World War II and until 1952, Headquarters Squadron 11 was assigned at San Diego, California; Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina and Auxilliary Flying Field, Edenton, North Carolina.

In 1952, the unit relocated to Atsugi, Japan, in support of Marine Corps units deployed and engaged in the Korean War. On 15 February 1954, the unit was redesignated to its present title. In March 1958 Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 11 deployed and supported American efforts relating to the



military posture of Taiwan, in its conflict with mainland China.

H&MS-11 received their first Crusader in 1960 and had four by the end of the year. The four F8U-1s were used for about a year and the squadron only had one F8U-1E on strength on 31 December 1961. The F8U-1E left the squadron midway through 1962 and Crusaders did not again join H&MS-11's inventory until 1964 when nineteen F-8Ds were operated for about a year.

On 7 July 1965, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 11 relocated to DaNang, Republic of Vietnam, in support of combined air operations. Within three days after leaving Japan,

Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 11 was supporting Marine Aircraft Group 11's first attack against the Viet Cong forces. In the seven year period between 1965 and 1971, the Squadron supported twelve different types of aircraft. In addition, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 11 provided aircraft maintenance support to Carrier Task Force 77 aircrews operating off Yankee Station. These aircraft often required repair resulting from battle damage.

Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 11 departed the Republic of Vietnam on 1 June 1971 and was subsequently assigned to the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing at MCAS, El Toro, California, where it provided continuous support to Headquarters, Marine Aircraft Group 11, and its F-4 Phantom Squadrons. The squadron was redesignated MALS-11 in October 1988 and currently flies the OA-4M Skyhawk.

HEADQUARTERS AND MAINTENANCE SQUADRON THIRTEEN H&MS-13 "OUTLAWS"

The Headquarters and Service Squadron was activated with Marine Air Group 13 on 1 March 1942 at San Diego California, and was soon deployed to the South Pacific. During the early years of World War II, the unit saw action in the Samoan Islands as part of the First Marine Aircraft Wing Defense Force. The Squadron redeployed in early 1944 to the Marshall Islands where the Squadron remained until the end of the war. Returning to San Diego, MAG-13 was deactivated on 30 November 1945.

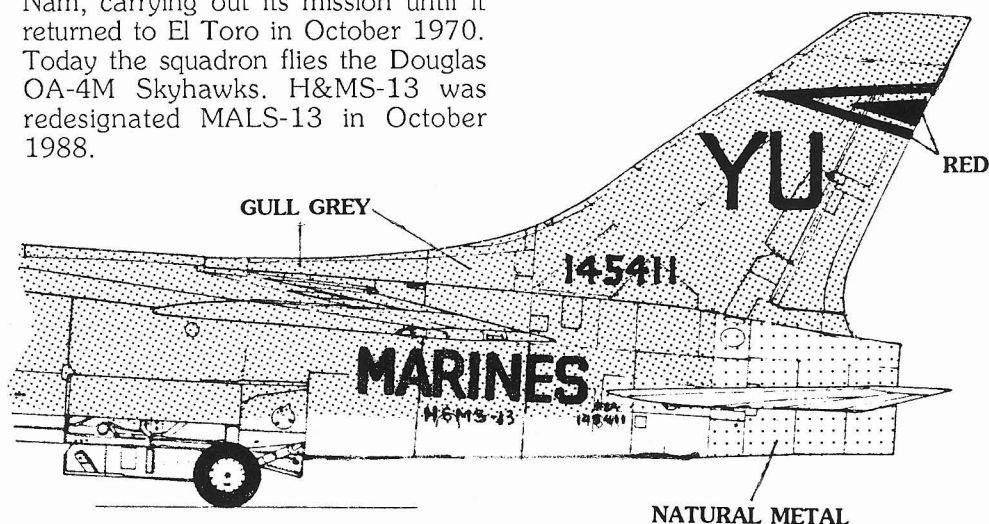
At the onset of the Korean Conflict, the Squadron was reactivated on 15 March 1951 at El Toro, and one year later was deployed with the Group to Kaneohe Bay in the territory of Hawaii. On 27 February 1954, the Squadron was redesignated as Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 13.

The Squadron deployed for four months to Atsugi, Japan, in late 1958 and was reassigned to the First Marine Aircraft Wing at Iwakuni, Japan. They returned to MCAS Kaneohe in February 1959. It was at Kaneohe that the Outlaws operated the Crusader. The first Crusader, an F8U-1, arrived in 1960 and in 1961 four F8U-1s (F-8As) and one F8U-1E (F-8B) were on hand. The F-8As

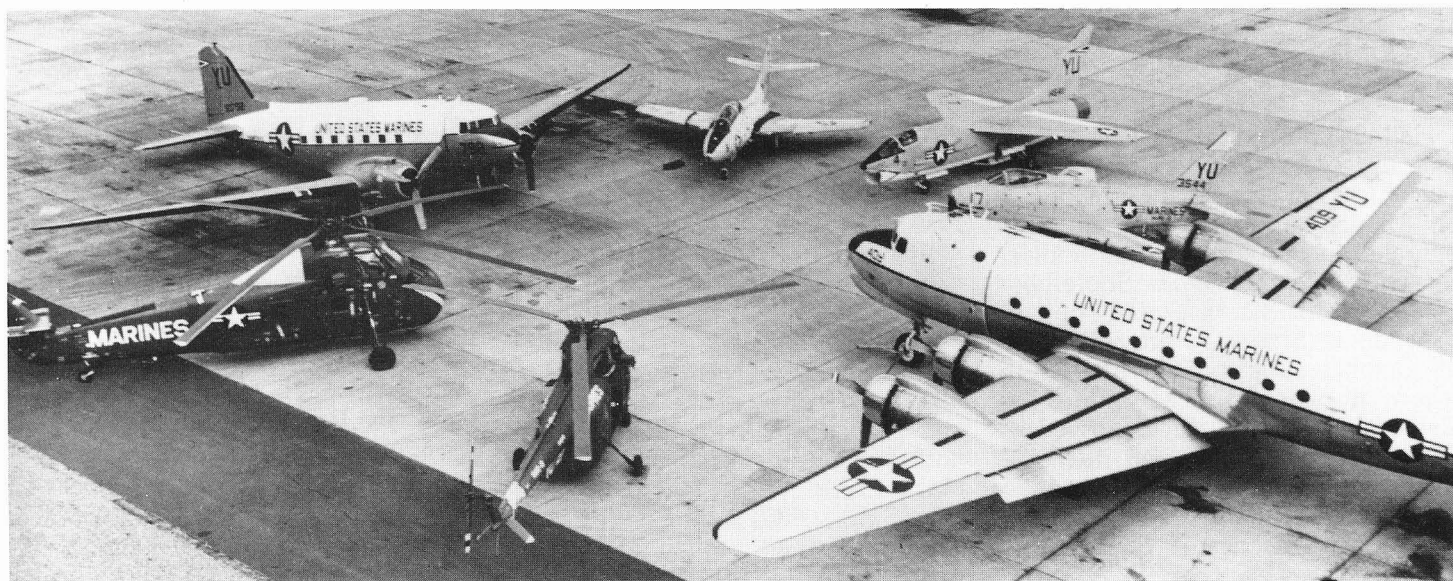


were replaced during 1962 with six F-8Bs and the F-8Bs were phased out by early 1964.

In September 1966, the Squadron deployed to Chu Lai, Republic of Viet Nam, carrying out its mission until it returned to El Toro in October 1970. Today the squadron flies the Douglas OA-4M Skyhawks. H&MS-13 was redesignated MALS-13 in October 1988.



H & MS-13 family portrait with F-8A 145411 between the TF-9J and the FJ-4B (see drawing above). (USMC)



HEADQUARTERS AND MAINTENANCE SQUADRON THIRTY-TWO H&MS-32



Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 32 was originally activated as Headquarters Squadron 32 on 1 February 1943 at Cherry Point, North Carolina. For the next 11 months the squadron was primarily engaged in training and preparing for a future reassignment which eventually came in January 1944 when Headquarters Squadron 32 was relocated to El Toro, California. Its stay on the West Coast was only for a brief duration for on 29 February it sailed for Hawaii. From March to October 1944 it was stationed at Ewa where it began readying itself and its parent unit, Marine Aircraft Group 32, for a future combat role. Its mission was mainly one of training and equipping pilots and ground officers for combat duty. In addition, the squadron was given a secondary mission – assisting in local air defense.

H&MS-32 departed Hawaii on 17 October 1944 in route to the Philippines. Arriving in the Philippines on 15 January 1945 the squadron operated in the area until its transfer to North China on 16 September 1945. H&MS-32 operated out of Tsingtao in Shantung province from 17 October 1945 until 19 May 1946 when it was ordered home to California. The squadron arrived at San Diego on 2 June and then was transferred to MCAS El Toro on 26 September 1946 where it remained until it was deactivated on 30 April 1947.

As part of the expansion of the Marine Corps during the Korean War, Marine Aircraft Group 32 was brought back into existence with its reactivation on 8 May 1952 at Miami, Florida. With the group's reactivation the headquarters element was also reactivated, but with the designation of Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron 32. In January 1954, the squadron began movement to its new home base at Cherry Point, North Carolina. By the twenty-fourth the relocation was completed and the

squadron resumed its normal activities. Shortly after the squadron's arrival it was redesignated to Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 32 on 15 February 1954. Following a three and one-half year tour of duty at Cherry Point, the squadron was relocated between 26-28 August 1957 to Beaufort, South Carolina, where it is presently located. Today they fly OA-4M Skyhawks. The squadron was redesignated MALS-32 in October 1988.

HEADQUARTERS AND MAINTENANCE SQUADRON THIRTY-THREE H&MS-33



H&MS-33 was activated on 1 February 1943 at MCAS Cherry Point as Headquarters Squadron 33. The squadron moved to Boque Field, North Carolina, on 27 September 1943 to complete its training. On 1 April 1944 the squadron detached from the Third Marine Air Wing and started a series of training deployments culminating with embarkment (on board) the USS Sea Pike from San Diego to the War zone. H&MS-33 operated from Palau, Espirito Santo, and Okinawa until reassignment to San Diego in February 1946.

The squadron was transferred to MCAS El Toro on 10 March 1946 and participated in various exercises until being transferred to the First Marine Air Wing in July 1950. H&MS-33 arrived in Japan on 21 July 1950 and then moved to Inchon, Korea, on 15 September to conduct

combat operations during the Korean War.

On 25 May 1955 H&MS-33 sailed for home and arrived back at El Toro on 15 June.



Photographic evidence of H&MS-11, H&MS-32, and H&MS-33 could not be found and may not exist because in some cases the H&MS squadrons were given custody of aircraft temporarily while awaiting reassignment. Therefore the aircraft were frequently operated in the previous user's markings. It is known that H&MS-32 F8U-1 143696 was lost on 7-26-59.

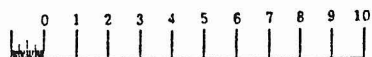
BOTTOM VIEW

TOP VIEW

Wing in
folded
position

FRONT VIEW

F-8E



SCALE IN FEET

1/72 SCALE

SIDE VIEW

ROTATING RED
BEACON

ECM
FAIRING



